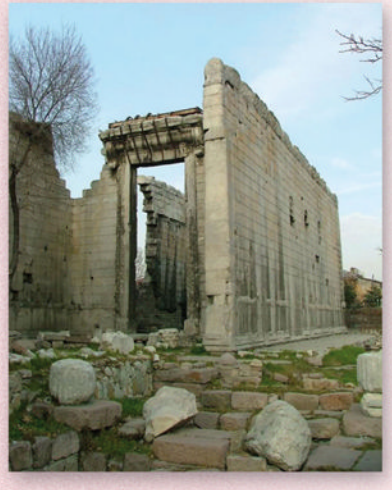
POLITICAL AUTOBIOGRAPHIES AND MEMOIRS IN ANTIQUITY

A Brill Companion



Edited by

Gabriele Marasco

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Political Autobiographies and Memoirs in Antiquity

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LEIDEN • BOSTON
2011

Cover illustration: Wall of the Temple of Augustus and Roma in Ankara depicting the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*.

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Political autobiographies and memoirs in antiquity : a Brill companion / edited by Gabriele Marasco.
p. cm. – (Brill's companions in classical studies, ISSN 1872-3357) Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-90-04-18299-8 (hardcover : alk. paper)
1. Classical biography–History and criticism. 2. Biography as a literary form. 3. Memoirs. I. Marasco, Gabriele. II. Title. III. Series.

PA3043.P65 2011
880.9'35–dc23

2011028606

ISSN 1872-3357
ISBN 978 90 04 18299 8

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PREFACE

This book aims at clarifying what it meant in antiquity to write about oneself, analyzing both the autobiographies and the memoirs, in which, however, the author granted a predominant space to his own actions. It will be mostly something new, given that the only general study on the autobiography—not still replaced—of Georg Misch, both in the German edition[1] and in the English revised and improved version[2] is a work from a non-classicist and is clearly addressed in a different way. It highlights the philosophical autobiography, which was the center of the interests and competences of its author;[3] it limits, therefore, the study of the political autobiography and it also neglects some essential works (e.g., the autobiography of Libanius is not even mentioned). Some recent conferences,[4] although showing a renewed interest in the autobiography, have been very fragmentary and far from providing a systematic treatment, which would highlight the development of this literature, the existing relationships among the various works, and the influence of the traditions and of narrative orientations.

On the other hand, the political autobiographies and memoirs belong to a completely different category: they are more linked to the immediate events, to the passions and the struggles that the autobiographic writings of the philosophers, of the literates, and of the men of the Church as Augustine. The personal interests, the partisanships, sometimes also the immediate practical aims justify therefore a greater prudence in verifying their reliability. The approach of the autobiographies to the memoirs devoted to particular events (excluded in the work of Misch) is

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[1] *Geschichte der Autobiographie*, 1, *Das Altertum* (Frankfurt am Main, 1907, 1931[2]).

[2] *A History of Autobiography in Antiquity*, 2 vols. (London, 1950).

[3] On the personality, the work and the philosophy of Misch, disciple and son-in-law of Wilhelm Dilthey, cf. O.F. Bollnow, *Studien zur Hermeneutik. Band II: Zur hermeneutischen Logik von Georg Misch und Hans Lipps* (Freiburg/Munich, 1983); M. Mezzancanica, *Georg Misch. Dalla filosofia della vita alla logica ermeneutica* (Milan, 2001).

[4] M.-F. Baslez, P. Hoffmann, and L. Pernot, éds., *L'invention de l'autobiographie d'Hésiode à Saint Augustin: actes du deuxième colloque de l'Equipe de recherche sur l'hellénisme post-classique (Paris, Ecole Normale Supérieure, 14–16 juin 1990)* (Paris, 1993); M. Reichel, ed., *Antike Autobiographien. Werke—Epochen—Gattungen* (Europäische Geschichtsdarstellungen) 5 (Cologne, 2005). See also, on a more limited context of time, M. Erler, S. Schorn, eds., *Die griechische Biographie in hellenistischer Zeit* (Berlin 2007).

suggested, moreover, from an apparently self-evident affirmation of Arnaldo Momigliano,[5] who observed that no autobiography can be considered really complete—first of all because it cannot narrate the death of his main character. Excluding, therefore, some works that are in a certain measure autobiographic, but that however belong to other affirmed and approved literary genres, such as oratory and poetry (for instance, the political songs of Alcaeus), the autobiographies and the memoirs are substantially similar and worthy being treated together.

On the other hand, the available material is needed for a complex job of selection and coordination. The lives of Xenophon, Cicero, Caesar, Augustus, and some Roman emperors are well known and there is no need to repeat them; other characters, such as Demetrius of the Phalerum, Aratus and to some extent even Josephus are less famous, but however known by the classicists. For others, less known to the general public, it was necessary to add a brief information, with the essential bibliography.

The fundamental themes we have dealt with in this book are three:

1. First of all, the birth and the development of the autobiography, an extremely complex problem because of the shortage of the testimonies, but also because of the difficulty to distinguish the origins of a not well encoded literary genre in an age in which the historical narration, the geographical, and the ethnographic were likely to confuse, as we can see particularly in the work of Herodotus. I remind, particularly, of the cases of Skylax and of Ion of Chius, but still in Xenophon's *Anabasis* and, as we shall see, in Nearchus' work these three aspects often have the tendency to overlap.

2. The problem of the finalities and, consequently, of the reliability of the examined works. Some autobiographies and memoirs have been written with obvious apologetic finalities, with the aim to defend the reputation of a politician at the end of his career or close to retirement, in the eyes of the contemporaries and of posterity. Some cases are classical, as Xenophon, who writes his work in his retreat; Aratus of Sikyon, who hopelessly tries to justify his rounds waltz with Macedon and the substantial failure of its political action; Quintus Dellius, *desultor belli civilis*, the official of Marc Anthony passed to Octavian, engaged to

[5] Momigliano, *Biography*, 16.

defend the indefensible; still Flavius Josephus, with all the consequences that his position as a rebel Jew passed to the allegiance to Rome involved on the political and, let's not forget it, on the religious field. In all these cases, the analysis of the methods by which the author pursues, more or less slightly, its propagandist aim reveals a great deal of complex political situations and of the way according to which a literary genre could be folded up to partisan finalities.

Other works had propagandist aims instead, relating to the political struggle of their times. They were therefore more tied to immediate motives and, for us, more subject to doubts and suspicions with regard to their reliability; but, perhaps just for this, they aimed to present themselves with greater insistence as truthful and objective. Caesar's *Commentaries* are obviously the classical case; but still more interesting, because of their outspokenly public character, are the eulogistic registrations, from those of the Hellenistic kings to the *Res Gestae* of Augustus.

Finally, other works were written to supply material for the historians, with different outcomes. The memoir written by Cicero on his consulate and sent to the historian Poseidonius to be used by him after appropriate amendments was rejected—we do not know with how much politeness—and this clearly shows its degree of reliability (which, after all, had to correspond to the innate modesty of Cicero). What Eunapius required by the physician Oribasius on the campaign in Persia and on the death of Julian was added to his historical work and it would be interesting to be able to judge his method and results. This system is likely to have been used in a number of situations (e.g., the letter in which Plinius the Younger, on Tacitus' request, narrated the death of his uncle during the eruption of Vesuvius).[6] Also, in these cases, to clarify the aims of a work also means to clarify its characteristics.

3. The development and the evolution of this genre in the times. In this perspective, it is important to clarify its characteristics and the literary influences on it. For example, it seems very interesting to me to outline the evolution of the autobiographic inscriptions, from the early Hellenistic ones to Antiochus of Commagene, until the *Res Gestae* of Augustus. In this case, the autobiographical tradition got together, and perhaps surrendered to other models, those of the great royal inscriptions, widespread in the Oriental world, from the Egyptian pharaohs to

[6] Plin., *Epist.* 6.16.

the Achaemenid kings. But there were also alternative models, and it is appropriate to highlight the influence of the autochthonous tradition of the *eulogia* on the composition of the work of Augustus. We lack above all the autobiography of this emperor, whose scarce fragments do not allow us to analyze his aims and methods, respectively in this work and in the *Res Gestae*, treating partly the same events in two different literary fields.

I hope therefore that this work can fill a void in the studies that seems today felt and, together, that it can give us back, as much as possible, the authentic voice of the main characters of history, with their passions, their personal aims, their points of view; because the political struggle and the vision of the history itself, are, above anything else, a matter of point of view.

My work in this book is dedicated to the memory of Adelmo Barigazzi and Arnaldo D. Momigliano, who early oriented me to the study of ancient biography.

Gabriele Marasco

ABBREVIATIONS

ANRW	*Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, ed. v. H. Temporini and W. Haase (Berlin, New York, 1972–).
CAH	*The Cambridge Ancient History*.
DNP	*Der neue Pauly*, ed. v. H. Cancik und H. Schneider (Stuttgart, 1996–2005).
GLAJJ	M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, 2 vols. (Jerusalem, 1974–1984).
MRR	T.R.S. Broughton, *The Magistrates of the Roman Republic*, 3 vols. (Atlanta, 1951–1986).
Momigliano, *Biography*	A. Momigliano, *The Development of Greek Biography* (Cambridge, Mass., 1971).
Jacoby, *FGrHist*	F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (Leiden, 1923–1958).
Misch, *Autobiography*	G. Misch, *A History of Autobiography in Antiquity*, 2 vols. (London, 1950).
OGIS	*Orientis Graeci inscriptiones selectae*, ed. W. Dittenberger, 2 vols. (Lipsiae, 1903–1905).
ORF	E. Malcovati, *Oratorum Romanorum Fragmenta liberae rei Publicae*, (Turin, 1976^4).
PLRE	A.H.M. Jones, J.R. Martindale, and J. Morris, eds., *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1971–1980).
Peter, *HRR*	H. Peter, *Historicorum romanorum reliquiae*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart, 1967^2).
RE	*Paulys Realencyklopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*.
Syll.	G. Dittenberger, *Sylloge inscriptionum graecarum*, 4 vols. (Lipsiae, 1915–1924^3).

CHAPTER ONE

CLASSICAL GREECE

Vivien J. Gray

Introduction

Autobiography identifies the author's self and experiences as his subjects, and the ancient authors have definitions of this.[1] For example, Plutarch said of Xenophon's autobiographical *Anabasis*: "Xenophon became his own history" (*Moralia* 345C *de Gloria Atheniensium*: Ξενοφῶν μὲν γὰρ αὐτὸς ἑαυτοῦ γέγονεν ἱστορία), and Isocrates describes his *Antidosis* as "an image of my disposition and of the rest of my habits of life" (7: εἰκὼν τῆς ἐμῆς διανοίας καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν ἐμοὶ βεβιωμένων). Few classical works focus on the self in the way that modern autobiography does, however,[2] so that surveys regularly include autobiographical "contributions" found in genres that are not primarily autobiographical. Misch emphasizes this:

> Hardly any form is alien to (autobiography). Historical records of achievements, imaginary forensic addresses or rhetorical declamations, systematic or epigrammatic descriptions of character, lyrical poetry, prayer, soliloquy, confessions, letters, literary portraiture, family chronicle and court memoirs, narrative whether purely factual or with a purpose, explanatory or fictional, novel and biography in their various styles, epic and even drama—all these have been made use of by autobiographers.[3]

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[1] The authorities are Misch, *Autobiography*; Momigliano, *Biography*, 23–42 for the fifth century and 43–64 for the fourth century. See also M-F. Baslez, P. Hoffmann, and L. Pernot, eds., *L'invention de l'autobiographie d'Hésiode à Saint Augustin: actes du deuxième colloque de l'Equipe de recherche sur l'hellénisme post-classique* (Paris, 1993). In this collection, Baslez in the introduction focuses on the question of the definition of autobiography; Trédé-Boulmer has a similar focus; Schneider treats lyric poetry; Brisson treats Plato's *Seventh Letter*; Carlier treats Demosthenes *de Corona*; Darbo-Peschanski concentrates on historical writing.

[2] A modern example is Clive James, who has been covering his life in installments, beginning with his early life in *Unreliable Memoirs* (London, 1980) and proceeding on to *Falling Towards England: Unreliable Memoirs II* (London, 1986) and subsequent volumes.

[3] Misch, *Autobiography*, 4.

While autobiography requires some major focus on the self, "memoir" is defined as a type of autobiography in which the author intrudes himself as a participant into an account that focuses equally on persons other than the self.[4] The central part of Xenophon's *Hellenica* has been called "memoir" because we know that he participated in the events he describes there, but he does not mention himself by name, which makes it memoir only in a loose sense.[5] The implication is also that memoir gives more sketchy impressions than autobiography proper, which suggests a looser unity or an unfinished composition.

Problems also arise when distinguishing "political" from other types of autobiography and memoir, as this volume desires to do. By a strict definition, "political" requires the autobiographer to focus on his involvement in political affairs. Demosthenes' *de Corona* is thoroughly political, and so is the alleged speech of Demades, but Plato in his *Seventh Letter* and Isocrates in *Antidosis* talk about their educational philosophy as well as their involvement in politics through their pupils, and little is conceptually different about their presentation of their experiences. Similarly, Ion seems to write political memoir when he describes the speeches and actions of Sophocles and Cimon as Athenian generals he heard or saw at parties, but Sophocles is presented as more of a poet and lover than a general, and even Cimon engages in singing, so that the memoir is as much literary and private as political.

There is also the problem of how authenticity impacts on the definition. If Plato wrote his *Seventh Letter*, then it is autobiography; but if it were written by another to defend his actions as alleged, then it would be a contribution to biography that merely takes up an autobiographical stance. The same problem besets Demades' speech of defense, *On the Twelve Years*. Finally, there is the problem of the fragmentary condition of many of the texts, which often obscures even the answer to the basic question of whether the writer used the first person, because the fragments are not quotations but rather reports from others who could have turned an original first person into the third. Ctesias can be shown to use the first person in only one fragment of his history of events in which he participated. Xenophon's presentation of *Anabasis* as the assessment of

[4] Misch, *Autobiography*, 15.

[5] There is a reference to the anonymous leader of the men of Cyrus, which may be Xenophon, at 3.2.7. See W.P. Henry, *Greek Historical Writing; A Historiographical Essay Based on Xenophon's Hellenica* (Chicago, 1967) for the status of this section as memoir.

the actions of "Xenophon" by Themistogenes of Syracuse serves to warn, in any case, that autobiography can be written in the third person under a pseudonym (see below).

The impulses toward autobiographical writing are complex. There is the large view that autobiography arose from the greater focus on the individual in the fourth century, but autobiographical contributions can be found even in the Archaic Age. Homer has Odysseus describe his own experiences, and, among the later poets, if we had the full collection it would be hard to discount as autobiography the description of his political aims and achievement in the poetry of Solon. The possibility of influence on the Greek tradition from eastern autobiography has been raised, but is hard to chart.[6] Philosophy seems to be one of the impulses to autobiography. Misch traces the expression of inward experience from Hesiod through the lyric poets and Solon to Heraclitus, culminating in the philosophic self-examination credited to Socrates.[7] The focus on the individual in the democratic courtroom is another impulse, also one that belongs to the fifth century. The philosophical and the rhetorical impulse meet in the Platonic *Apology*, where Socrates speaks autobiographically in the courtroom of his philosophic mission. Autobiography is regularly associated with rhetorical praise and blame, and in many works there is the defensive desire of the autobiographer to explain his intentions and actions to the world that misunderstands them. There are, of course, as many problems in defining the self that is the subject of autobiography in Classical Greece as in the modern era,[8] but in the defensive works surveyed in this chapter the self is defined in relation to the "other," which is often the self as it is misconceived by ignorant or envious audiences.

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the claims that various works have to autobiographical status in Classical Greece. I classify them according to the categories of autobiography mentioned in the two main authorities: Misch[9] and Momigliano, even where those categories are only potentially autobiographical.[10]

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[6] Misch, *Autobiography*, 19–58; Momigliano, *Biography*, 34–38.

[7] Misch, *Autobiography*, 67–95.

[8] For an introduction to the modern problems of self, see A. Elliott, *Concepts of the Self* (Cambridge, 2001), and for the ancient world see C.B.R. Pelling, ed., *Characterization and Individuation in Greek Literature* (Oxford, 1990) with useful general chapters by Gill, Halliwell, Russell, and Pelling.

[9] Misch, *Autobiography*, 110–154, 154–175. Misch writes mainly on Plato's *Seventh Letter* and Isocrates' *Antidosis*.

[10] Another division of autobiographic contributions can be found in *Brill's New Pauly* under "Autobiography," 406–408: defensive rhetoric, letters, memoirs (Ion is not included

Category One: Autobiographical Travel Literature

"Accounts of travels must be regarded as predecessors of autobiography."[11] Modern travel writers, such as Paul Theroux, are known for their personal views on the journeys they describe, but this is not generally the case with ancient travel writings we know of, such as those of Hanno the Carthaginian, Hecataeus of Miletus, Herodotus, and Scylax of Caryanda. The ancient travel book classically described a journey in terms of distances and geographic features, with information on flora and fauna and the practices of the inhabitants of the regions visited, and this description can be very impersonal. Hanno the Carthaginian described his journey along the coast of Africa in the sixth century.[12] His account purports to come from a Carthaginian inscription, but the content is very similar to that found in Greek accounts of travel.[13] In his report we have Hanno using the first person plural of his own experiences and those of his group on a voyage to found new cities: "We arrived after three days ... we chased the inhabitants." The self is represented in its reactions to the people and places described, sometimes experiencing emotions such as fear of the inhabitants, but the autobiographical element is otherwise slight.

We could trace Greek travel literature back to Homer's *Odyssey* or eastern precedents such as Hanno,[14] but for the first Greek work devoted to travel we have Hecataeus of Miletus (550–490 BC), who wrote a *Journey Round the World* (Περιήγησις Γῆς) as well as a historical work about the Greek past, *Genealogies*.[15] There are over three hundred fragments of Hecataeus, but most of them are only very brief notices, so conclusions

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in this category, but Xenophon's *Anabasis* is), authors introducing themselves to the public (in prefaces and so forth), and philosophic and religious reflection (works mentioned are late, but Plato's *Letters* and Isocrates' *Antidosis* seem to be forerunners).

[11] Momigliano, *Biography*, 29–30 refers to E. Norden, *Agnostos Theos* (Leipzig, 1913; reprint Darmstadt, 1956), 313–331, 326, that the first person is a mark of *Periploi* and *Apodemiai*.

[12] The fragments of Hanno are in K. Müller, *Geographi Graeci Minores*, 1 (Paris, 1855; reprint Hildesheim, 1965). See also J. Blomqvist, *The Date and Origin of the Greek Version of Hanno's Periplus* (Lund, 1979).

[13] The document is preserved in a single manuscript, a Greek translation of the original Punic, dating from the tenth century (*Codex Heidelbergensis* 398).

[14] Herodotus 4.196 has been said to refer to Hanno's work.

[15] For Hecataeus, see L. Pearson, *Early Ionian Historians* (Oxford, 1939). S. West, "Herodotus' Portrait of Hecataeus," *JHS* 111 (1991), 144–160 has written perspicaciously on Herodotus' representation of Hecataeus and its literary constraints.

must be guarded.[16] He created a map of the world, to which Herodotus 4.36 may refer, with the mythical Ocean flowing around it and the positions of the continents, main seas, and rivers. His travel book describes a journey around the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, with detours up the main rivers, and an excursion into the Atlantic coast of Africa. He notes distances from place to place, names and locations of towns and their stories, the customs of the locals and their flora and fauna. There is little investment of the self in these descriptions. A typical fragment is *FGrHist* 1.F18a: "Hecataeus the Milesian says that the Argonauts went from the Phasis to the Ocean, from there to the Nile, and thence into our sea" (Ἑκαταῖος δὲ ὁ Μιλήσιος ἐκ τοῦ Φάσιδος διελθεῖν εἰς τὸν Ὠκεανόν, εἶτα ἐκεῖθεν εἰς τὸν Νεῖλον, ὅθεν εἰς τὴν ἡμετέραν θάλασσαν). The possessive "our" identifies the writer as Greek, but the comment reveals nothing more about Hecataeus as a person. There are even more impersonal comments, like F291–292: "The Chorasmians inhabit the land of Parthi toward the east, possessing plains and mountains; in the mountains are native trees …" (= Athenaeus 2.70A–B).

Hecataeus uses the first person in his *Genealogies* to announce his identity and make statements about his inquiries in the tradition of historical writing that Herodotus would pursue after him: "Hecataeus of Miletus says thus: I write these things as they appear to me to be true; for the tales of the Greeks are many and laughable, as they appear to me" (Fr. 1: Ἑκαταῖος Μιλήσιος ὧδε μυθεῖται· τάδε γράφω, ὥς μοι δοκεῖ ἀληθέα εἶναι· οἱ γὰρ Ἑλλήνων λόγοι πολλοί τε καὶ γελοῖοι, ὡς ἐμοὶ φαίνονται, εἰσίν; cf. 19, 27b). The question is whether he used the first person in his travel book as well and what it revealed. One attested use is the expression of a considered opinion "I think" about a town at Fr. 234 (Herodian): δοκέω δὲ μάλιστα παρὰ Κόλουραν, ἵνα Πριήνῃς ἕζοντο, but the self that is revealed is merely that of the inquirer. The fragments do not speak of personal suffering on the voyage or any impact on the self that came from the knowledge he acquired in the way of a modern travel book. The report from Herodotus 2.143 (Fr. 300) that Hecataeus recited his genealogy to the Egyptian priests at Memphis might suggest that he invested his inquiry with more personal detail if we believe that he is the source of the story. That might appear unlikely, because Herodotus has the priests dismiss Hecataeus' recitation on the grounds that it did not recognize the greater antiquity of Egypt, but

[16] Text and commentary in Jacoby, *FGrHist* 1. Texts of authors are *OCT* where they are not indicated to be otherwise.

Herodotus might have twisted Hecataeus' original account of the episode. Herodotus (5.36) also reports the part Hecataeus played in the Ionian Revolt, including his attempt to dissuade Aristagoras of Miletus from rebelling against Persia in 499 BC, in which Hecataeus "catalogues all the nations ruled by Darius and the forces he commanded" but fails to dissuade Aristagoras. Herodotus (5.125–126) also reports his failed attempt to advise Aristagoras about where to build his fortress after the failure of the revolt. Hecataeus did not write a memoir of his role in contemporary politics as far as we can tell, and his appearance as a stereotypical wise advisor is suspiciously Herodotean, but he could have described his participation in a digression. It is appropriately autobiographical that it is his fearsome knowledge of geography that makes him oppose the revolt and advise Aristagoras about the best location for his fortress. His character as a man who knows his geography is consistent with his travel book.

Herodotus (484–425 BC) did not write a separate travel book, but the second book of his *Inquiries* reads like a travel book of Egypt, and he incorporates features of the travel genre into the historical record of past achievements, which is his major focus. For instance, he describes the distances and places involved when Aristagoras shows the map of the world to King Cleomenes to convince him how wealthy Persia was and how he should assist in the Ionian Revolt (5.49–54). He also describes his own personal journeys in pursuit of his historical inquiry: "I went to the part of Arabia near the city of Buto to find out about the winged snakes. When I got there I saw countless bones and spines …" (2.75); and "I wanted to understand these matters as clearly as I could, so I also sailed to Tyre in Phoenicia, since I had heard that there was a sanctuary sacred to Heracles there …" (2.44). Yet this inquiry is the defining feature of history rather than autobiography, and the self that emerges is not the whole man, as autobiography might require, but only the professional face of the historian, as in the case of Hecataeus. The purpose of the focus on self is to advertise the new genre of history and to guarantee as accurate the facts elicited by the travel rather than to describe the self and its experiences for their own sakes. Yet this much is clear: the quest for knowledge stimulates self-reference. The discovery of knowledge for its own sake rather then for the sake of founding cities (specified as Hanno's purpose) may be particularly Greek.

Xenophon's *Anabasis* is more promising as autobiographical travel since it incorporates features of the travel book into an account that is focused on his political and military experience on the expedition in which Cyrus challenged his brother Artaxerxes for the Persian Kingship

(401–400 BC). He complicates his account by presenting himself in the third person rather than the first and by attributing the authorship of the work to the pseudonymous Themistogenes of Syracuse, but that will be discussed below. Meanwhile, we can notice that the account is given as a report of a journey, with the first book focused on the march to Babylon and the rest focused on the journey back to Greece, and that it has the usual features of the travel book but that Xenophon invests this with personal suffering, like Odysseus who "wandered far" and "knew the cities and temperament of many men" trying to save his own life and that of his comrades.[17] We do not know whether other travel writers stopped at the houses of their guest friends or had to forage for food or experienced threats from the locals (Hanno did), but with Xenophon the need for shelter on the journey makes his descriptions of towns, villages, and local inhabitants more engaged; the need for food and drink make his descriptions of the food more engaged, and the descriptions of geographic features such as weather conditions are more engaged, because Xenophon sees comrades die of exposure in the snowy mountains of Armenia. *Anabasis* 1.5 reads like an impersonal account of travel; for example:

> Then Cyrus drives through Arabia, with the Euphrates river on his right through five empty *stathmoi*, thirty-five parasangs. In this place the land is a level plain like a sea full of absinthe and where there were other shrubs or grasses they all had good smells like perfumes. There was not a single tree but all kinds of wild beasts particularly wild asses and large ostriches and there were bustards and gazelle. Sometimes the men on horses hunted them and whenever a man chased the asses they ran forward and stopped because they were faster than the horses, and when the horses got near, they ran and stopped again and it was not possible to get them unless those on horses separated and hunted in packs.

This looks like the impersonal travel book, but the final comment that "their flesh was delicious" puts an autobiographical gloss over the whole account. Herodotus is just as vivid in describing how to catch crocodiles, but we do not count that as autobiography, because he is not depending on them for food: "Crocodiles are hunted in all sorts of different ways, one of which strikes me as particularly remarkable, and so I will write it down" (2.70). The personal engagement continues to inform the rest of *Anabasis* 1.5, in which Xenophon notes the great distances on the

[17] For echoes of the *Odyssey* in *Anabasis*, see C. Tuplin, "Heroes in Xenophon's Anabasis," in *Modelli eroici dall'antichità alla cultura europea*, ed. A. Barzano (Rome, 2003), 115–156.

journey and the deaths of many pack animals through starvation because of the complete lack of any kind of plant or tree in the area, and that even the local inhabitants imported their food from Babylon by taking the local stones (all that the land produced) for grinding corn there and selling them. His own grinding starvation is captured in his comment: "Food ran out." Consider also the description of the march through the snow and the suffering it entailed, as well as the villages they found so welcome after the march: the houses built underground and inside the houses goats, sheep, cows and fowl and their young, with wheat, barley, beans and barley wine in great bowls—"a very pleasant drink once you were used to it" (4.5).

The travel described in Pseudo-Scylax reverts to the impersonal. The author makes first-person statements, but they reveal nothing about his personality. On the surface it looks to be an early travel book: Herodotus 4.44 mentions that the Persian King Darius (530–522 BC) wanted to discover the extent of Asia and sent people, including Scylax of Caryanda in Asia Minor, to chart the Indus; they sailed down the river to the sea and along the coast. Yet the Scylax under whose name we have received a manuscript of a journey does not seem to be the same person as the one mentioned by Herodotus, since his text shows signs of having been written in the fourth or third century.[18] The journey he describes starts with the pillars of Heracles and goes around to the columns of Libya, listing the usual places and distances, with comment on the usual flora and fauna and customs and nations. He uses the first person for organizational purposes, a very traditional use of the first person in historians such as Herodotus and Xenophon: "I will start from the Pillars of Heracles": Ἄρξομαι δὲ ἀπὸ Ἡρακλείων στηλῶν τῶν ἐν τῇ Εὐρώπῃ. "I return to where I was …": Ἐπάνειμι δὲ πάλιν ἐπὶ τὴν ἤπειρον, ὅθεν ἐξετραπόμην. The latter phrase is repeated many times (7.5, 13.22, 29.5, 34.14, 48.6, 53.2, 58.21, 67.7, 67.18, 97.5, 98.17, 98.26, 99.8, 99.18, 103.7). "I come back to the mainland" may be true in a literal sense, as if he travels in person, as well as in the literary sense of coming back to the main focus of his narrative. There is also a comment that reveals the inquiring self of the author: "These are the islands in the area whose names I have discovered (many others have no names) …" (21.7 Κατὰ ταύτην τὴν

[18] P. Counillon, *Pseudo-Skylax: le périple du Pont-Euxin: texte, traduction, commentaire philologique et historique* (Bordeaux, 2004), 40–41. Counillon's dating of the work to the middle of the fourth century is on the basis of the cities mentioned in the account of Macedonia, but parts of the work may well be from earlier authors.

χώραν αἵδε νῆσοί εἰσιν, ὧν ἔχω εἰπεῖν τὰ ὀνόματα (εἰσὶ δὲ καὶ ἄλλαι ἀνώνυμοι πολλαί)). Herodotus (7.224) makes a similar comment when he says he has discovered the names of the three hundred who died at Thermopylae.

The conclusion must be that travel writing has a potential for autobiography, but it can be a very impersonal account of distances and places and other information. It begins to become autobiographical when the journey is presented as one of personal inquiry and when the normal features, such as distance and food products and geography, become part of a more personal story, as in *Anabasis*.

Category Two: Memoirs of Famous Men Ion of Chios

Anecdotes of famous men become autobiographical when the narrator presents himself as a witness to their actions and speeches and intrudes as a participant into the stories he tells. Fragments of such anecdotes are found in Ion of Chios, who is one of my assigned authors.[19] He was a poet who won victories in the tragic competitions at Athens from the middle of the fifth century and died before 421 BC.[20] He wrote a philosophical work called *Triagmos* and another on the *Foundation of Chios*. His claim to autobiography rests on his fragmentary *Epidemiai*, in which he describes the activities of literary men, such as Aeschylus, and military men, such as Cimon, in situations of leisure in which he was a participant. The title translates to "spells of residence" and has been loosely linked to travel literature.[21]

Here the degree to which the narrator intrudes into the action determines the autobiographical value, and surprising resemblances can be found, for instance between Xenophon's Socratic conversations in *Memorabilia* and Ion's *Epidemiai*.[22] Both narrators focus mainly on the words

[19] V. Jennings and A. Katsaros, eds., *The World of Ion of Chios* (Leiden, 2007) contains important articles, particularly C. Pelling, "Ion's Epidemiai and Plutarch's Ion," 78–109. The text used here is Jacoby, *FGrHist* 392; see also L. Leurini, *Ionis Chii Testimonia et Fragmenta*, 2nd ed. (Amsterdam, 2000).

[20] Aristophanes, *Peace*, 834–837.

[21] Momigliano, *Biography*, 30.

[22] It may be significant that the word used of Ion's reports, that "he recollects" ἀπομνημονεύει (Pelling, "Ion's Epidemiai and Plutarch's Ion," 95 n. 68), is the title of Xenophon's *Memorabilia* (*Apomnemoneumata*).

and actions of their central characters, both claim in the first person that they witnessed them, and both intrude as characters into their reports in the third person: Xenophon when he presents himself learning from Socrates in conversation about the dangers of passion (*Mem.* 1.3.8–13), and Ion when he is poked in the ribs by Aeschylus to hear his remark about the power of the spectacle (below). There is an even closer parallel in Xenophon's *Symposium*, which reports words and actions from a symposium, which is the setting also for the two best known of Ion's fragments. Xenophon's preface indeed announces the actions of serious men at play as the theme, and this aptly describes Ion's fragments where Cimon and Sophocles are serious military men, but at symposiastic play. Xenophon does not intrude into the action of his *Symposium*, but Ion is also a silent witness, except in the fragment above with Aeschylus. The similarities show how difficult it is to contain the definition of autobiography, since Xenophon's Socratic works are more usually seen as contributions to Socratic biography. So much hinges on the role of the narrator that we should look carefully at the impulse behind the claim to witness and participation, which may not be to focus on the self but to provide rhetorical confirmation through autopsy of the events described, which is allied to the autoptic inquiry of historical investigation that marks the travel book above. We could say, nevertheless, that Xenophon's memoirs of Socrates have an autobiographical impact, because he ends *Memorabilia* with a statement of how Socrates' conversations influenced people—who must include the narrator—and in the *Symposium*, too, those in attendance are impressed by Socrates' goodness (9.1). Ion was also likely to learn from what he reported.

Plutarch and Athenaeus give us two substantial fragments of Ion that describe the Athenian general Cimon and the Athenian poet and general Sophocles at a party.[23] Plutarch reports (*Cimon* 9) that Ion said he came to Athens from Chios as a complete youth (μειράκιον) and attended a party at the house of Laomedon that was also attended by Cimon. Cimon was invited to sing over the wine and sang well, provoking comparison from the guests with Themistocles, who could not sing but made the city rich and great. Then "as was natural over the drinking" they proceeded to speak of Cimon's greatest achievements for the city, and Cimon himself told the story of the "stratagem" whereby he won an advantage for the city

[23] Pelling, "Ion's Epidemiai and Plutarch's Ion," comments on this fragment.

over the allies. The story is that he stripped the barbarian prisoners he took and divided the booty into heaps of clothes and jewelry on the one side and naked prisoners on the other. When he offered them the first choice the allies took the clothes and jewelry, but he got the prisoners, who were later ransomed and proved worth more than their weight in gold. This theme of men boasting of their best achievement over the wine again recalls Xenophon's *Symposium*, where Socrates suggests that each guest should boast of "what is worth most" to him, "what they take most pride in" (3.3); Socrates himself boasts ironically that he is an excellent procurer, and so on. Cimon seems to be operating by these rules when he boasts of his "stratagem" as the "cleverest thing he ever did;" it may be that the full text of the party as Ion reported it would include some agreement as to the choice of this topic by the host or by the guests, to which Cimon responded with his story.

Ion as narrator makes no contribution in speech or action in this fragment, and in this he resembles the narrator of Xenophon's *Symposium*, too. There may be an explanation of his silence in his description as a *meirakion* (if this applies to his age when he attended the party as well as when he came to Athens): his youth made it inappropriate for him to speak. We can work out that Xenophon was also young when he attended his *Symposium*, because he says that it celebrated Autolycus' athletic victory, which is dated to 421 BC. Some have thought he was too young to attend, making his claim to witness a literary fiction,[24] but we are not clear on his dates and he might have been a *meirakion*. Ion and Xenophon might then both be developing a memoirist's motif of the young man who remembers occasions that shaped his development and writes them down in maturity.

Ion's work might be distinguished from Xenophon's as more political, but Xenophon's guests include Charmides, the future member of the Athenian oligarchy of the Thirty, who makes a political contribution when he speaks ironically of the advantages of being poor in the democracy (4.29–33), and his host is Callias, the future Athenian politician and priest of the Eleusinian Mysteries, whom Socrates urges to serve the democracy at the end of the party (8.39–41). Moreover, Ion mentions the singing of Cimon as well as his political stratagem, and we shall see

[24] The modern authority on Xenophon's *Symposium* is B. Huss, *Xenophons Symposion* (Stuttgart, 1999); also "The Dancing Socrates and the Laughing Xenophon," *AJPh* 120 (1999), 381–410, reprinted in *Oxford Readings in Xenophon*, ed. V.J. Gray (Oxford, 2010), 257–282.

that in the case of Sophocles below his focus is on his poetic criticism and his erotic desire to kiss the boy who is serving the wine at the party much more than his generalship. Xenophon's *Symposium* shows the same literary interest as Ion in the discussion of Homer involving Niceratus (3.5–7, 4.45), and the same erotic interest when Critobulus boasts of his beauty and says that his beauty could make the boy and girl who are providing the entertainment at his party kiss him (4.18); this motif develops into the beauty competition for which the prize is kisses from the young people (4.10–28, 5). If we imagine that Xenophon is indicating that he knows of parties of politicians when he has his host Callias comment to Socrates that his party will be more decorous if it is graced by learned men than by "generals, hipparchs and those who are canvassing for office" (1.4), we would have an allusion to such parties as Ion had described, and a fine line between "political" and other memoir.[25]

The fragment about Cimon reveals nothing about the personality of Ion except as much as writers in many genres reveal in their choice of topics. Some have tried to draw out Ion's political views,[26] but this can be done for non-autobiographical works as well. Plutarch says elsewhere that Ion evaluated Cimon as more affable and cultured than Pericles (Plut., *Pericles* 5.3), that he gave a physical description of Cimon (Plut., *Cimon* 5.3), and that he reported the phrase that Cimon used when he urged the Athenians to help Sparta over the revolt of the helots and the earthquake: "calling them not to stand by and let Greece become crippled or the polis without its yoke-fellow" (*Cimon* 16). These are autobiographical only in that we know of Ion's witness and participation.

Plutarch describes Cimon's story about the allies as a military "stratagem." The "stratagem" Sophocles used to steal a kiss from a lovely boy is the central feature of the fragment from Athenaeus dealing with another party that Ion said he attended. Sophocles is represented here as an Athenian general, but also as a poet and lover, and the anecdote plays on this distinction. We seem likelier in this case to have the actual words that Ion used, because Athenaeus (13.81.3, Kaibel 603E–604D = F392.6 Leurini)

[25] Xenophon gives an account of a party consisting entirely of military men in *Cyropaedia* 2.2, but of course claims no witness.

[26] See A. Geddes, "Ion of Chios and Politics," in *The World of Ion of Chios*, eds. Jennings and Katsaros, 110–138, and also A. Blanshard, ibid., 155–175, who thinks that Ion's symposium setting is neutral ground for his politics, and speculates whether or not he approved of Athenian imperial policies.

introduced the fragment with the comment that Sophocles loved boys as Euripides loved women, and that "Ion the poet thus writes in the so-called *Epidemiai*" (Ἴων γοῦν ὁ ποιητὴς ἐν ταῖς ἐπιγραφομέναις Ἐπιδημίαις γράφει οὕτως). "I met Sophocles the poet in Chios when he sailed to Lesbos as general, a man playful and clever in his wine" (Σοφοκλεῖ τῶι ποιητῆι ἐν Χίωι συνήντησα, ὅτε ἔπλει εἰς Λέσβον στρατηγός, ἄνδρι παιδιώδει παρ' οἶνον καὶ δεξιῶι). Ion goes on to say that that the dinner took place at the home of the Athenian *proxenus* on Chios, Hermesilaus, and to describe how Sophocles asked the boy who was pouring the wine whether he wanted him to have pleasure in his drink. When the boy agreed, Sophocles asked him to move more slowly in serving him. This is obviously an erotic pass. The boy blushed red and Sophocles began to quote poetic lines to describe his beauty, and this becomes a major focus of the fragment. Xenophon's *Symposium* again provides a comparison. We find the equivalent for Sophocles' blushing boy in the blushing Autolycus, who has high erotic interest for all the company (1.8–10). He blushes not in an erotic context, but rather when he confesses that his greatest pride is in his dear father, who is at the party with him (4.12 ἀνερυθριάσας). There is more erotic interest in the fear the Syracusan entrepreneur has for the fleshly corruption of his young boy entertainer by the company (4.52–54).

Ion reflects his own poetic occupation when he has Sophocles quote a line of Phrynicus to his fellow diner to describe the boy's blushing: "the light of love shines on his reddened cheeks" (λάμπει δ' ἐπὶ πορφυρέαις παρῆισιν φῶς ἔρωτος). This is taken up by an Eretrian teacher of letters, another diner, who declares the image inappropriate and imagines the effect if a painter did paint the boy's cheeks bright red. Sophocles responds with a tour de force of other color images from poets of the highest quality to silence him, and this moves the company to laughter. He then turns back to the boy, lures him into coming closer, then ambushes him with a cuddle and a kiss, causing the company to clap and shout. This is the equivalent of the "stratagem" described by Cimon at the other party. Sophocles explains his manoeuvre as part of his training to be a general, because Pericles had told him that though he was a good poet, he did not know how to be a general; and "was his ambush of the boy not a very good 'stratagem?'" (μελετῶ (εἶπεν) στρατηγεῖν, ὦ ἄνδρες, ἐπειδήπερ Περικλῆς ποιεῖν μέν ⟨με⟩ ἔφη, στρατηγεῖν δ' οὐκ ἐπίστασθαι. ἆρ' οὖν οὐ κατ' ὀρθόν μοι πέπτωκεν τὸ στρατήγημα;). But Ion concludes that though Sophocles was clever at parties when he drank, he was no more effective in the affairs of the city than any other good and

true Athenian: τοιαῦτα πολλὰ δεξιῶς ἔλεγέν τε καὶ ἔπρησσεν, ὅτε πίνοι (ἢ πράσσοι). τὰ μέντοι πολιτικὰ οὔτε σοφὸς οὔτε ῥεκτήριος ἦν, ἀλλ' ὡς ἄν τις εἷς τῶν χρηστῶν Ἀθηναίων.

Plutarch preserves another small fragment in which Ion describes how he was sitting next to Aeschylus at the Isthmian games, and Aeschylus poked him in the ribs and made an observation about the power of training; the story is said to illustrate how people are benefited not just from words but by sights and all other experiences:

> … such as is said about Aeschylus and others of that kind; for Aeschylus while viewing the boxing at the Isthmian Games, when the loser was struck and the theatre erupted in noise, nudging Ion of Chios, he said: "Do you see what his training is like? The one who made the hit is silent, but the spectators shout aloud." (Plut., *De prof. in virt*. 8, p. 79 DE)

> ἀλλ' οἵ γε μᾶλλον ἔτι προκόπτοντες οὐκ ἀπὸ λόγων μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ θεαμάτων καὶ πραγμάτων πάντων ὠφελεῖσθαι δύνανται καὶ συνάγειν τὸ οἰκεῖον καὶ χρήσιμον, οἷα καὶ περὶ Αἰσχύλου λέγεται καὶ περὶ ἄλλων ὁμοίων. Αἰσχύλος μὲν γὰρ Ἰσθμοῖ θεώμενος ἀγῶνα πυκτῶν, ἐπεὶ πληγέντος τοῦ ἑτέρου τὸ θέατρον ἐξέκραγε, νύξας Ἴωνα τὸν Χῖον 'ὁρᾷς' ἔφη, 'οἷον ἡ ἄσκησίς ἐστιν· ὁ πεπληγὼς σιωπᾷ, οἱ δὲ θεώμενοι βοῶσιν; (Stob. Floril. 3, 29, 89)

The question that goes begging, but is crucial for the autobiographical nature of his work, is whether Ion made regular appearances like this in his stories, and whether he replied to Aeschylus' point or remained the silent narrator. At least it shows that he is able to put himself, if not center stage, then at least right alongside the main player.

Anecdotes like those of Ion can be told by participants in the action in non-autobiographical literature, for instance when "sources" tell historians stories of events in which they participated. The autobiographical element is determined the intrusion of the narrator's self into the events described; Ion's account of his meeting with Aeschylus does just that, but the fragment shows him to be a mainly silent narrator, and it is hard to formulate the difference between his role and that of the narrator in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* or *Symposium*. The difficulty of defining memoir may be crystallized in the anecdote that Xenophon has Socrates tell about the Spartan general Lysander and the Persian prince Cyrus in *Oeconomicus*: "This Cyrus is said to have shown him signs of friendship when Lysander came bringing him the tributes of the allies, as Lysander himself reported it to a friend once in Megara." Socrates then reports another story Lysander told of how Cyrus showed him around his pleasure park in Sardis, revealing his own personal love of hard work in spite

of his Persian luxury (*Oec.* 4.20–25). We could imagine Lysander telling this story to his friend in a "residence abroad," at a party hosted by his friend. By some standards this Megarian would be a memoirist, and so would Lysander.

Category Three: Defensive Autobiographical Rhetoric

The category of defensive rhetoric provides more definite examples of "autobiography,"[27] particularly rhetorical speeches such as Isocrates' *Antidosis* and Demosthenes' *On the Crown*. The courtroom and assembly often forced orators to autobiographical defense of their past careers in real life, and this gave rise to a literature that could mimic real life for autobiographical purposes.[28] Mantitheus in Lysias, *Or.* 16.9 famously says that the charges arising from *dokimasia* give this opportunity to give an account of one's life (cf. Lysias, *Or.* 24.1). Isocrates explicitly says that he adopts the pretext of being on trial in the matter of an exchange of property in *Antidosis* to provide readers with "an image of my disposition and the other aspects of the life I have lived" (*Or.* 15.7). Demades also speaks defensively of his experience in his *On the Twelve Years*.

This kind of rhetoric casts the autobiographer as the defendant, and this choice of the defensive stance may reveal the aversion to the self-promotion that was implied in autobiography when it was not provoked by criticism; it certainly represents self-praise without provocation as undesirable. Glenn Most finds that the first person in Greek literature most often tells the tale of self as one of misfortune in order to allay envy and other negative feelings in an audience consisting of strangers. He identifies autobiography as a special manifestation of this tale of misfortune: "an extended first-person narrative told to strangers."[29] Of the many works regularly considered as autobiography, he retains only speeches in which the speaker defends himself and tells such tales: Andocides' *On the Mysteries*, Demosthenes' *On the Crown*, and Isocrates'

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[27] Misch, *Autobiography*, 155 on rhetoric as an autobiographical impulse: "Autobiography first set foot in Greece in the field of political authorship, which was a field of intellectual life that was occupied by rhetoric," and 164: "Isocrates' autobiography is to be understood as a development of the enkomion" (as seen in his Evagoras).

[28] Yun Lee Too, *A Commentary on Isocrates' Antidosis* (Oxford, 2008), 8–11 gives background.

[29] "The Stranger's Stratagem: Self-Disclosure and Self-Sufficiency in Greek Culture," *JHS* 109 (1989), 114–133.

Antidosis, ("almost invariably these texts take the form of self-defences against legal attacks," "almost always tales of misfortune").[30] But his definition of autobiography as a narrative of misfortune can be extended to include Plato's *Letters*, as well as Xenophon's *Anabasis*. In Most's view (126 f.) these defensive poses are a negotiation between the reader and the writer of the kind captured by Plutarch in "On praising oneself without provoking envy" *(Moralia* 539a), which is that self-praise is acceptable to the audience only if one is defending oneself, if one has been unfortunate, if one has been wrongfully treated; otherwise you should do it under a guise. We can go back to Thucydides' funeral speech for how citizens are likely to envy high praise even of the dead from others (2.33.2); even more odious is praise of self from the living. The autobiographer needs to manufacture a crisis of victimization in order to allay the envy that comes naturally to strangers in order to restore the balance of his relations with the potentially envious audience. Friends might tolerate self-praise, but not strangers. The stranger's stratagem is to transform a need into a narrative of loss, certainly in Homer, in order to secure what he desires. This negotiation is thoroughly rhetorical.

There is room for reflection on this defensive stance. The writers themselves bring attention not just to the envy in the audience but to the coverage that the defensive pose allows them. There is also the advantage of constructing the self in opposition to the views of others that goes beyond the discourse of the envy of strangers.

Isocrates' Antidosis

The kind of autobiographical material we find in *Antidosis*, for instance the references to how his age impedes his efforts, to the envy of his professional rivals, and his relation with his pupils, recur in Isocrates' other speeches (*Panath*. 3–4, 5–24, 200–272),[31] but his *Antidosis* is picked out for attention because it appears to be focused on his own achievements and has no other agenda. The exceptional feature is that he adopts a fic-

[30] Most, "Stranger," 122–125. He dismisses the poets and Herodotus' references to his inquiries as autobiographical because the unity of his work is not derived from the first person, as well as Ion's *Epidemiai* and Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, and Xenophon's *Anabasis* because this is a third-person narrative.

[31] See in general on Isocrates, Yun Lee Too, *The Rhetoric of Identity in Isocrates: Text, Power, Pedagogy* (Cambridge, 1995) and *A Commentary on Isocrates' Antidosis* (Oxford, 2008).

tion of a trial in order to focus on these achievements; Misch points out that Plato presented Socrates defending himself against the charges of his trial, but Isocrates presents himself.

Isocrates adopts the defensive stance from the outset when he says that rival sophists regularly slander him (3: are speaking badly of his occupation and saying that he writes for court cases, foolish babble that he has hitherto ignored since he dealt with much more elevated speeches than that; cf. *Panath.* 5–24, etc.),[32] but that he ignored them until he lost a case of an "exchange of wealth," or *antidosis*, in the courts in real life and realized that others mistakenly shared their envious views ("absolutely deceived about my habits or moved by envy"). He then decided he had to clear his name, and he hit on the stratagem of writing this speech that answered a fictitious sycophant who pressed fictitious charges for the base reasons that sycophants do (7, 13). This tale of misfortune allows him to advertise his character and life and education and offer an image of his mind and his life and teachings. He openly canvasses the idea of praising himself without pretense, but says that it could not provide the coverage he wants ("I would not be able to take in everything I chose to say") and would incur envy, so he chooses "a pretense of a defense." Even so, he says, there will be material that is not appropriate for a courtroom, such as discussion of his philosophy and educative material for young men, and he emphasizes the diverse range of topics he is able to cover by his strategy (9–12). He makes an issue of the defensive stance he adopts when he hopes that he will dispel envy in those (strangers?) who are genuinely mistaken in their view of him, but cause even more envy in those who are envious out of malice (13). The theme of envy recurs in the account of the conversation he has with a friend about the impact of the speech he was writing (140–154). Isocrates reviews his life to find what was most praiseworthy, but the friend tells him that some people were so vile that they envied goodness and sympathized with criminals sooner than with good men. Isocrates concludes that they are beyond the pale and decides to ignore them and appeal to the others to give him a fairer hearing. We see here the distinction between envious strangers and tolerant familiars (the friend with whom he shares his thoughts) as well as between the virtuous strangers who will recognize his true virtue when he reveals it, and the vicious who simply envy it.

[32] Some translations of Isocrates are taken from the *LCL* translation of G. Norlin, others are my own.

The theme of envy is indeed a *topos* in this kind of autobiographical writing. Demosthenes reworks it at *de Corona* 3–4 in another defensive autobiographical context, indicating that self-praise is unacceptable to audiences even when it is defensive because of envious human nature, which prefers to hear criticism; he blames his opponent for driving him to that necessity and adopts no other stratagem to justify it. Yet he also stresses the coverage that the defensive stance gives him in *de Corona* 8, where he says he will cover his whole life and his public achievements, and, at 34, where he says that his opponent has gone outside the charges and that this justifies his coverage outside too.

The legal charges Isocrates imagines he is answering are Socratic—that he corrupts the young by teaching them to speak and gain the unjust advantage in the law courts, and that he has made a great deal of money by taking as his pupils orators, general, kings, and tyrants (30)—the theme of wealth is important because it was the issue in the trial for *antidosis*. The self that Isocrates portrays is as conventional as courtroom rhetoric required, and his rhetorical training in praise and blame produces the stereotype of a patriotic citizen in the democracy: "exhibiting a cultural ideal as embodied in an individual man."[33] To illustrate his democratic principles, he explains that his advice in the work *To Nicocles* that was addressed to the ruler of Cyprus was designed for the democratic benefit of his people, because it urged him to create a mild government (40, 67–74). He describes as his pupils or friends those who have been crowned for their service to the democracy (93–101). He answers for the failures of his pupil and associate, Timotheus, by saying that he did not court the orators or please the people and was brought down because of that (100–139). There are few personal specifics, except at 161, where we hear that he lost his patrimony in the Peloponnesian War and began to restore his fortunes through his teaching.

Isocrates shows us what can be made of the defensive stance in writing autobiography. In bringing attention to this stance as a fiction, the speech becomes an example of how to write autobiography. His "stratagem" ranks alongside Xenophon's pretense below that he was not the author of his own achievements in his autobiographical *Anabasis*.

[33] Misch, *Autobiography*, 174.

Demades

The work that has come down to us under the name of Demades entitled *On the Twelve Years* also takes up the defensive stance for autobiography. Demades was an Athenian politician who served on diplomatic missions to Philip and Alexander.[34] He delivered many public speeches, but only the *Twelve Years* has come down to us. It is normally dated to 326 BC, because it defends his political record over the previous twelve years and begins with the battle of Chaeronea in 338 BC.[35] Demades starts by identifying, as Isocrates did, those opponents in politics who oblige him to speak of his own achievements because they "slander my life" (2). He names himself and describes his early life, how he did not write for the courts (Isocrates again), but mounted the platform to give public advice and public service (6–9). He addresses his jurors in the standard courtroom manner nevertheless:

> The hopes I place in you are justified; for the sympathy of his hearers, when it is ranged on the side of justice, is no small factor in securing the acquittal of the accused. If I gain this I shall rebut all the calumnies; without it neither speech nor laws, nor the light of facts, can save a man unjustly brought to trial. I need not remind you that numerous prosecutors on many occasions in the past have, on the strength of their pleas, been thought to be urging a just case, but after a comparison with the defence they have been found to be themselves speaking falsely and I am convinced that my accusers now will have the same experience, if you consent to grant me a favorable hearing. As they attempted to question the rest of my administration, I wish to make a few points in connexion with it and then to pass on to the remainder of my defence in order to prove their dishonesty to you. I am the son of Demeas, Athenians, as the elder ones among you know, and the early part of my life I lived as best I could, neither doing harm to the community nor troubling any individual in the city. I merely persisted in trying, by my own efforts, to better my humble position. Penury may involve inconvenience and hardship but it carries with it no discredit, since poverty is frequently, I imagine, a mark not of weakness of character but of sheer misfortune. When I entered public life I did not concentrate on lawsuits or the perquisites to be derived from writing speeches but on speaking freely from the platform, a practice

[34] The latest work on Demades is by P. Brun, *L'Orateur Démade. Essai d'histoire et d'historiographie* (Bordeaux, 2000). *Brill's New Pauly*, 231, refers to Suda for biographical information. The text and translation is that of J.O. Burtt, *Minor Attic Orators* (Cambridge, Mass., 1954).

[35] I. Worthington, "The Context of [Demades'] On the Twelve Years," *CQ* 41 (1991), 90–95 argues for a dating to 323. "Nothing points to a date of 326." In fact, the speech is dated to as late as Roman imperial times.

> which makes the lives of orators dangerous but holds out the clearest opportunities of success, if men are careful; for, though they succumb to the speaker, their country's safety must not also fall a victim. I have, to bear me out, the burial of a thousand Athenians performed by the hands of our adversaries, hands which I won over from enmity to friendship towards the dead. Then, on coming to the fore in public life, I proposed the peace. I admit it. I proposed honors to Philip. I do not deny it. By making these proposals I gained for you two thousand captives free of ransom, a thousand Athenian dead, for whom no herald had to ask, and Oropus without an embassy.[36]

This section refers to the occasion when he proposed honors for Philip and won back the bodies of the dead and the prisoners after the battle of Chaeronea in 338. He negotiated again in 336 when Alexander was close to attacking Athens, and in 335 when Alexander had razed Thebes. The text of the speech breaks down during the account of this third diplomatic achievement, and we are reduced to short extracts, such as that his policy should be examined in its own right and not in the light of later events (35), "If only the Thebans had had a Demades" (26); that he tamed Alexander through flattery (42); that he hates the popular leaders for destroying his policies (44); that it was not he who made the proposals, but "my country, the occasion, the circumstances," who just used his voice.

The problem for Demades as autobiography is that most scholars consider the speech to be written by someone else and therefore a biographic rather than an autobiographic contribution.[37] This does not mean that there is no interest in the work for autobiography, however, since the author has created the fiction of an autobiographical stance in writing it and therefore contributes to our understanding of how autobiography might be written.

Category Four: Plato's *Letters* 7–8

In the collection of letters attributed to Plato, *Letters* 7 and 8 have major autobiographical interest. They are presented as responses to requests for political advice, but they also count as narratives of misfortune told to strangers. The letters clarify possible misunderstanding not only for the

[36] Substantial translations are from the *LCL* translation.

[37] Momigliano, *Biography*, 89. The idea of a Demadean biography is made more plausible by the existence of another biographic tradition about him in the collection of sayings called the *Demadeia* (Brun, *L'Orateur Démade*, ch. 2).

recipients (the friends and followers of Dion, the relatives and friends of Dion) but also for the wider public, who count as strangers. The story of misfortune they tell is that Dion of Syracuse (408–354 BC) had been a pupil of Plato in philosophy and had summoned him to reform Dionysius II, the tyrant of Syracuse, who came to power in 367 BC. Plato went to assist him, but he and Dion failed in their reform. Dionysius exiled Dion, who then returned with armed forces and the support of some members of Plato's Academy to overthrow him in a violent civil war, quite contrary to the principles Plato had taught him. After a short period of rule, Dion was assassinated. Plato made three visits to Syracuse: in 388, when Dionysius I was in power and Dion became his pupil, in 367 when Dionysius II came to power, and again in 361. The events he reports in his letters are also found in various forms in Plutarch's *Life of Dion* and in Diodorus Siculus XVI.

Issues of authenticity arise again. Morrow leans toward accepting both letters, explaining away beliefs that seem un-Platonic as well as historical implausibility. Edelstein sees the *Seventh Letter* as written by a follower of Plato, devised to clear his mentor of various charges.[38] But whether autobiographical or not, the letters reveal what an autobiographical contribution could be.

The letters are early examples of the epistolary form of autobiography, like those in the later collections attributed to famous men from Themistocles to Alexander, which gave a kind of narrative of their lives.[39] Isocrates wrote letters to Philip of Macedon and others, but they were not overtly autobiographical. His *Antidosis* offers a better comparison. Like Plato's *Letters*, Isocrates' *Antidosis* makes an autobiographical contribution to the tradition of philosophical reflection leading to Augustine. They were contemporaries. Isocrates established a school of philosophic and rhetorical education that gave a more practical training than the more abstract kinds of philosophy we associate with Plato's Academy, but they were both primarily philosophers, and Isocrates' assertion of his

[38] G. Morrow, *Plato's Epistles; a Translation, with Critical Essays and Notes* (Indianapolis, 1962); L. Edelstein, *Plato's Seventh Letter* (Leiden, 1966), 56–69. Edelstein believes that the impulse for the forgery lay in the success that Timoleon had in implementing the reform of Syracuse and Sicily, which the letter mentions as Plato's proposed policy. It was too much to bear that the military general had liberated Sicily and not the philosopher-king. "But the voice that speaks from the autobiography is, I believe, not the voice of the historical Plato" (169).

[39] P.A. Rosenmeyer, *Ancient Epistolary Fictions: The Letter in Greek Literature* (Cambridge, 2001), ch. 8, "Pseudonymous Letter Collections."

disengagement from political life (*Antidosis* 4) is like Plato's after his disenchantment with politics, which he describes in the *Seventh Letter* below. Both digress at length about their philosophies, but they also describe their involvement in politics as mentors. Isocrates sought to reform Nicocles, the ruler of Cyprus, in an address that gave him good advice as a pupil, but which also outlined his own thought and character (*Antidosis* 69); he counted among his pupils the Athenian general Timotheus, whom he also advised about politics. Plato became involved in the politics of Sicily also through his pupil Dion.

Plato's Seventh Letter

Plato's *Seventh Letter* meets the request from the friends and relatives of Dion to cooperate with them in implementing their political aims after the assassination of Dion. Plato agrees to cooperate only if their aims are the same as those of Dion, and for this reason he elucidates his instruction of Dion and their joint instruction of the tyrants so that his audience "learn the way in which these convictions come about" (324b).[40]

After commenting on his association with Dion on his first visit to Sicily, when he says he was about forty (that is, a mature man, formed in his convictions), Plato reverts to his earlier life and describes how he originally formed the conviction that drove their reform, which was that there could be no good governance until philosophers ruled or rulers philosophized (324c–326b). He says he desired to join his relatives in the oligarchic administration of Athens after the Peloponnesian War, but was disillusioned by their injustice, citing the time they tried to make Socrates participate in their reign of terror. When democracy was restored he was moved to participate again, but this regime allowed powerful persons to put Socrates put to death. His complete disillusion with politics then led him to his conviction about the need to inject the justice of philosophy into politics. Some suspect the authenticity of the claim that Plato wanted to enter politics, but his expressed hope that Hipparinus, who is one of those addressed, might become another Dion and solve the problems of Syracuse might make him want to offer such experience authentic or otherwise as a caution to Hipparinus about politics.

Plato then describes how Dion called on him to implement his philosophy and make Syracuse a place of justice by turning Dionysius into

[40] Translations are from Morrow, *Plato's Epistles*. See most recently L. Brisson, "La lettre VII de Platon, une autobiographie?" in *L'invention de l'autobiographie*, 37–46.

a philosopher, but he already reflects the focus on misfortune in autobiography when he says that his first visit was the result of "some higher power" that intended misfortune (326e); for in teaching Dion he unwittingly laid the preparations for the destruction of the tyranny and the lawlessness that followed. He then defensively explains why he went to assist Dion in his reform (327b–). He speaks of the need to discharge his duties to philosophy and prove a practitioner rather than an empty theorist, and he alludes to criticism of his visit for its boldness (328c), which might mean blame for consorting with tyrants (329b). He also describes his determination not to betray his philosophic friendship with Dion and renders in direct speech his appeals to him to implement his philosophy. He imagines with the benefit of hindsight what Dion might say to him if he were banished without receiving the assistance he requested. The self that Plato depicts is dedicated to philosophy and friendship, but it is on the defensive. His desire not to prove an empty theorist has been thought inauthentic, and there is the question whether it comes from the real Plato or from the obligations of the defensive stance he must take.

Plato describes his visit as a resounding failure. Dionysius exiled Dion and imprisoned Plato in the midst of reports that he and Dion were plotting against him. Plato describes how he was detained by the tyrant, but also how he refused to transfer his support from Dion to Dionysius, in a defense on two fronts. He refers briefly to his escape and then his eventual return to Syracuse on his third and final visit, but leaves that to one side (331) in order to clarify the instruction he and Dion gave Dionysius, and which he now gives the friends and followers of Dion: to master the passions and win loyal friends and followers, to resettle Sicily, and to defeat the Carthaginians, the longtime rivals for the control of Sicily (332–333). This needed clarification because it had been misinterpreted as plotting against the tyrant in order to put Dion in power (333a ff.). Such were the slanders, Plato says, that they eventually caused Dion's assassination at the hands of the Athenian philosophers who returned with him to depose the tyrant; Plato contrasts their disloyalty and violence with his own loyalty to Dion and avoidance of violence (333b–334b). He summarizes his misfortune (336b: "some daemon or avenging deity has fallen upon us, and through disrespect for law and the gods, and worst of all, through the audacity of ignorance … has a second time overturned all our plans and brought them to naught") and repeats his advice to the recipients of the letter (336c–) to quell faction and offer mercy to their opponents in a lawful settlement to

be adjudicated by a panel of experts from throughout Greece. He ends with a further comment that this is what he and Dion wanted, and that only misfortune prevented them from attaining it (337d–e: "But fortune is mightier than men and shattered our plans. Now it is for you to try to bring them about with better luck and may divine favor attend your efforts").

He then describes his third visit to Syracuse at the invitation of Dionysius in 361 BC. He calls this account "incidental" and "for those who are interested" (330c), but wishes to make plausible "the strange and improbable nature of the events" (352). He cites as his motives for this visit letters from Dionysius promising milder treatment for the exiled Dion and the appeals of the philosophic community to supervise Dionysius' education in philosophy (338–340). He describes how he tested Dionysius' commitment and digresses to speak against committing philosophic thoughts to writing (340–345), how he tried to get a better deal for Dion when Dionysius cut off his revenues (345c), but found Dionysius faithless even in the little he promised in his speeches to him. The letter is marked by a great deal of dialogue and speech, directly reported. Plato even dramatizes his soliloquy about his decision to continue to negotiate with the tyrant and the exact terms on which he told Dionysius he would remain with him (346–347), but when the tyrant sold Dion's property, Plato says bitterly: "This then was the result of my efforts in aid of philosophy and my friends." He describes the last troubled phase of his sojourn: how Dionysius cut the pay of his older mercenaries, how he was involved in the witch-hunt after Heracleides (who was supposed to have stirred the mercenaries to revolt), and his final escape. This is followed by his subsequent dealings with Dion (350b), his refusal to join his coup, his age, and his disillusion with his experience in Sicily; but he still defends Dion's philosophic and political aims for Syracuse as those of a man of virtue.

In the *Eighth Letter* Plato deplores the continuing faction in Syracuse, recalls the great services of the Dionysii against the Carthaginians, and calls on Dionysius not to pursue tyranny, but rather kingship and the rule of law. He resurrects Dion from the dead and puts his advice in his old pupil's mouth as what he would have accomplished had he lived "if avenging deities in the guise of friends had not prevented it" (357a). Dion advises the restoration of law and unity under a board of three kings (Dion's son, the son of Dionysius, and Dionysius himself) who will be sworn in by ambassadors from abroad. The kings will have charge of religious and other appropriate matters, but peace and war will be in the hands of thirty-five guardians ruling in conjunction with an assembly

and a council, who will have legal jurisdiction in the most serious cases. Dion goes on to repeat some of the advice of the *Seventh Letter* about how he would have resettled Sicily with Greeks and driven out the barbarians, goals he hopes the new regime will pursue. And when his advice ends, the letter ends.

Plato's *Letters* in this way present a tale of misfortune that addresses misunderstandings of his aims from critics who apparently said that he should not have had dealings with tyrants, that he let down Dion, and that he was plotting against Dionysius to bring Dion to power. He appears to have written the letter to clear his name and to restore faith in philosophy and philosophers by dispelling misapprehensions. The self that emerges is the well-meaning philosopher and true friend, but the other overwhelming impression is the self's disillusion and disappointment, which is generated by the adoption of the defensive stance, which seems to have become a requirement of autobiographical expression.

Category Five: Historical Memoir and Autobiography

Historians could embed their autobiographical experience into their histories, for instance when Thucydides mentions the plague he caught at Athens and his generalship in the campaign for Amphipolis and consequent exile (2.48.3, 4.104, 5.25–26), and when Ctesias recorded his own experiences in the last years of his larger history of the East. But Xenophon's *Anabasis* is unique in focusing entirely on the expedition to Babylon and back in which he participated. Intriguingly, it is another "tale of misfortune," and it may further attest to the aversion to self-depiction in that it describes Xenophon's achievements in the third person and credits its authorship to the pseudonymous Themistogenes of Syracuse, in a stratagem similar to that of Isocrates' *Antidosis*.

Sophaenetus of Stymphalos

Another *Anabasis* is said to have been written by Sophaenetus of Stymphalus, who figures as the commander of one thousand Arcadian mercenaries in Xenophon's *Anabasis*.[41] That would have had a potential for

[41] Xenophon portrays him as one of the older captains, who went to inquire about the imprisonment of Clearchus and the other generals, who showed courage and wisdom and is condemned to pay a fine at the same time that Xenophon is charged with beating men (*Anab*. 1.1.11, 1.2.9, 2.5.37, 4.4.19, 5.3.1, 6.5.13, 5.8.1).

memoir as well as autobiography, but Stephanus of Byzantium is our only source, and he cites only four fragments from the work, which have nothing autobiographical to offer, but rather look like extracts from an impersonal style of travel book: it reports on the location of Charmande near the Euphrates and the river Physcus and on the Carduchi, putting Sophaenetus' authority alongside Xenophon's reference to the Carduchi and to the Taochi. There is a good chance, moreover, that Stephanus is mistaken and that references to the work represent misunderstandings in the transmission. Commentators find "Sophaenetus" a convenient source for *Hellenica Oxyrhyncia* and Ephorus to mediate for the account of the events of the *Anabasis* in Diodorus Siculus,[42] but there is also the view that Diodorus largely bases his account on Ephorus' reworking of Xenophon.[43]

Ctesias

Ctesias of Cnidus, the Greek physician of King Artaxerxes II of Persia and confidante of the queen mother Parysatis, wrote a history of the East from the earliest times in twenty-three books and an account of India. His work is memoir when he describes events he witnessed and autobiographical when he describes his own part in these events. The autobiographical years cover 415–387 or 405–387, depending on how you interpret the length of his stay in Persia after being taken as a prisoner of war (DS 2.32.4).[44] He had such standing at the Persian court that he was involved in diplomatic negotiations,[45] and in this he followed Herodotus' Democedes of Croton, another doctor who served the Persian King Darius and was sent on a mission to Greece (3.125, 129–

[42] *Brill's New Pauly*, 635–636, indicates that Sophaenetus may be responsible for the "non-Xenophontic" parts in of Xenophon's account.

[43] P.J. Stylianou, "One Anabasis or Two," in *The Long March*, ed. R. Lane Fox (2004), 68–96. Stylianou reminds us of earlier scholars who noted close verbal echoes of Xenophon in Diodorus and concluded that Diodorus supplemented his work with a Persian point of view, which was identified as Ctesias.

[44] *Testimonia* and *fragmenta* for Ctesias follow the text of D. Lenfant, *Ctésias de Cnide. La Perse; l'Inde: autres fragments* (Paris, 2004), with correspondences to Jacoby, *FGrHist* 688, to which, however, Lenfant adds material. DS 14.46.6 says Ctesias ended his history in 398/7 BC when it appears that he left Persian service and he had been at the Persian court for seventeen years. Another accepted date is 405 BC. Galen identified his clan as that of Hippocrates: *On Hippocrates de articulis* 4.40 = Lenfant T4, *FGrHist* T4.

[45] R. Drews, *The Greek Accounts of Eastern History* (Cambridge, Mass., 1973), 103–116 gives a general account of his work.

137). Ctesias won honor in the service of Artaxerxes as Democedes did: Photius, for instance, says he had two daggers made of special iron, one from Artaxerxes, the other from Parysatis.[46] He is the only source that Xenophon names in his historical works and that is for his information about the battle of Cunaxa in *Anabasis* 1.8.27.[47]

The autobiographical sections of Ctesias' history are extant only in fragments and summaries from Photius, Nicolaus of Damascus, and Plutarch's *Life of Artaxerxes*. The question is how to get behind these fragments to see how he presented his role in these affairs. Did he use the first person? We have a first-person statement from him, but it concerns his role as doctor rather than as political participant:

> In my father's time and his father's no doctor administered hellebore; for they did not understand the mixing and the measure and the weight, how much to give. If one did give hellebore to drink, he first advised the patient to prepare for the risk of great danger, and of those who drank it many choked to death and few survived; now it seems much safer.[48]
>
> (Lenfant F68 = Oribasius CM 8.8)

Ctesias also used first-person statements of his inquiry in the traditional manner of the historian.[49] Lenfant has him claim "himself to have heard these things from Parysatis" (T8 = F15 [51]) when he gives an account of how Cyrus was born when his father was king, whereas Artaxerxes was born earlier; this impacts on the question of the succession to the throne, which was contested between Cyrus and his brother at Cunaxa. The historian's intimacy with the queen mother may make the traditional engagement with his source more autobiographical. His other statements of inquiry are more impersonal: "he says that he made it his business to take details from the royal hides in which the Persians according to some custom have compiled the old achievements and to compile the history and make it known to the Greeks" (DS 2.32 = Lenfant T3). There is further evidence of inquiry in *Indika*: "Ctesias says he is being most truthful because he writes some things from personal observation, and

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[46] Photius 72 p. 45b = Lenfant T3b. See also Lenfant, T11hd.

[47] On Xenophon's citations, see V.J. Gray, "Xenophon and Historiography," in *Narrators, Narratees and Narratives in Ancient Greek Literature*, eds. I. de Jong, R. Nünlist, and A. Bowie (Leiden, 2004), 129–146; also "Interventions and Citations in Xenophon, *Hellenica* and *Anabasis*," *Classical Quarterly* 53 (2003), 111–123.

[48] J. Marincola, *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography* (Cambridge, 1997), 185. Marincola speculates that this is from his *Persica*.

[49] Drews, *The Greek Accounts of Eastern History*, 105–107: but his sources "had little knowledge of or interest in political history."

other he learned from those who saw them, and that he left out many things more wondrous in order that he not seem to those who had not seen them to be putting together things that were unbelievable" (Lenfant F45 [51]); in Lenfant F45db, "he says he saw the beast," in F45ea, "he says he inquired about the fire." The self that emerges here is the traditional inquirer.

What then of self-representation outside statements of inquiry? Xenophon reports that Ctesias tended the wound that Cyrus inflicted on Artaxerxes at Cunaxa and described the numbers of the dead (*Anabasis* 1.8.27). The first we hear from Ctesias himself is his claim that he was one of the ambassadors who negotiated with the Greeks after Cunaxa (Lenfant F23 = Plutarch *Artaxerxes* 13.4–7). Plutarch disbelieved the claim on the grounds that Xenophon knew his work but did not mention him in the negotiations. Whatever the truth, the autobiographical interest is as much in Plutarch's reaction as in the claim itself. Plutarch believed that Ctesias lied for his own self-glorification and for the glory of Sparta and Clearchus, as one who never ceased making room for himself in the events when he could praise them: ἀλλὰ δαιμονίως ὁ Κτησίας, ὡς ἔοικε, φιλότιμος ὢν καὶ οὐχ ἧττον φιλολάκων καὶ φιλοκλέαρχος. ἀεί τινας ἐν τῇ διηγήσει χώρας ἑαυτῷ δίδωσν ἐν αἷς γενόμενος πολλὰ καὶ καλὰ μμνήσεται Κλεάρχου καὶ τῆς Λακεδαίμονος. We presume from this that Ctesias praised Clearchus and the Spartans in order to promote himself as their friend, but we do not have the whole report. Ctesias may have praised Clearchus to please Parysatis, who favored him as a loyal follower of Cyrus, the younger son she preferred to Artaxerxes.

Plutarch here prefers Xenophon but also shows the classic negativity toward one who intrudes into the action without negotiating this with his audience. We will see below other negative reactions to examples of his self-promotion, possibly caused by envy. There was a strong ancient tradition that the good historian should suppress his own claims to honor in the desire to be utterly objective. Lucian (*de historia conscribenda* 38–41) called on the historian to make himself a "stranger in his own works" and "a man without a polis" (41 ξένος ἐν τοῖς βιβλίοις καὶ ἄπολις). Ctesias appears to have ignored this requirement as well as the defensive stance required by autobiography. We could find some hint of the courtroom in the brief reference to his trial and acquittal by the Spartans on Rhodes after he left Persian service (Photius 75 p. 42 = Lenfant F30), but no such stance is evident in the fragments even though it might be imagined that Ctesias needed to prove himself their friend in the required defensive manner.

Sometimes, as in the famous scene in which Parysatis heard of the death of Cyrus, there is no sign of Ctesias' presence in spite of his vivid writing (Demetrius, *de Eloc.* 216). But Ctesias certainly placed himself center stage in his dealings with Clearchus in prison after the general had been seized and imprisoned by the Persians (Lenfant F27 = Photius 68–71 pp. 44a20–b19). Photius summarizes: Ctesias met with Clearchus in prison, Parysatis tried to save Clearchus but he was executed, a great gust of wind heaped up a memorial to him after his death, Parysatis tended his grave because he had been loyal to Cyrus. Plutarch (*Artaxerxes* 18 = Lenfant 28) adds that Clearchus asked for and received from Ctesias a comb for his Spartan hair, gave Ctesias his ring with the dancing Caryatids to seal his friendship with his clan, received food from Ctesias—to the pleasure of Parysatis. He also adds how Clearchus asked him for a sword concealed in his meat, which Ctesias was too afraid to provide; and how, though Artaxerxes swore to spare him for Parysatis, his wife Stateira secured his execution. On the memorial to Clearchus after his death, Plutarch says that Ctesias "writes a tragic scene for the memory of Clearchus" in his typical partisan style: ἐπιτραγῳδεῖται τῇ Κλεάρχου μνήμῃ.

Of equal autobiographical interest is Photius' summary of the involvement of Ctesias in the dealings of the Persian King with Evagoras of Cyprus (Lenfant F30 = Photius 72 pp. 44b20–42): messages from Evagoras to Ctesias concerning letters from Abulites, Ctesias' letter to Evagoras about reconciliation with Anaxagoras of Cyprus; the arrival of Evagoras' messengers in Cyprus and the delivery of the letters from Ctesias to Evagoras; the speech of Conon to Evagoras about admittance to the king; Evagoras' letter about his demands; Conon's letter to Ctesias and the tribute to the king from Evagoras; receipt of the letter; Ctesias' speech to the king about Conon and a letter to him; the giving of the gifts from Evagoras to Satibarzanes and the arrival of the messengers to Cyprus; Conon's letter to the king and Ctesias; the king's surveillance of the Spartan ambassadors; the king's letter to Conon and the Spartans, which Ctesias delivered himself; the appointment of Conon as sea commander by Pharnabazus.

Plutarch (*Artaxerxes* 21.2–4 = Lenfant F32) suggests again that Ctesias was over-promoting himself in these negotiations: that the letter from Conon to the king about his control of the sea was intended for the dancer Zenon of Crete or the doctor Polycritus of Mendaios as intermediaries for the king, and for Ctesias only if they were not available as intermediaries. He also reports "it is said" that Ctesias changed the letter to indicate

that Conon requested his attendance to him as "useful for affairs on the coast." Ctesias claimed he was given this duty by the king, but Plutarch is detecting more self-promotional lies in Ctesias' account—as they were reported by earlier writers.

These letters are among the earliest examples in which the author writes and receives letters in his own history.[50] Ctesias uses fictitious epistles even in the earlier period, when Semiramis laughed at the letter from Stabrobartes of India that accused her of starting a war in which she had not been wronged (DS 2.18.1I and in the letters between Stryangaeus and Zarienaea [Dem., *De Eloc*. 213, P. Oxy 2330 = Lenfant F8a–b]), but Ctesias' own letters are an autobiographical version of those letters exchanged between the Persian king and Pausanias or Themistocles in Thucydides 1.128–129 and 137.[51] If the form of the letter is the usual, we will have a greeting from Ctesias to his correspondent, followed by a first person address. It is unclear whether his literary adaptation departed from official archive form.

Plutarch read Ctesias as a historian who did not respect the constraints on self-presentation and whose reports were rejected as self-promotionally false; but if we had the original writings, Ctesias might emerge as one of our more complex autobiographers. We can already sense this in the Ctesias who is too afraid to give Clearchus the sword he requests in prison.

Xenophon, Anabasis

In *Anabasis* Xenophon writes exclusively about events in which he participated, but there is a catch: it is presented as if it were a regular piece of historical writing, with the achievements of "Xenophon" described in the third person, and evidence from *Hellenica* 3.1.2 and Plutarch that Xenophon credited the authorship to "Themistogenes of Syracuse."[52] This seems to be another narrative stratagem designed to deal with the problems of autobiography. Authors who adopt pseudonyms are hard to find,

[50] Rosenmeyer, *Ancient Epistolary Fictions*, gives a history of the development of the letter, but does not focus on Ctesias (or Plato).

[51] Rosenmeyer, ibid., 45–60 discusses the use of letters in Herodotus and Thucydides in her section on historiography, showing the affinity of letters with other forms of historical narrative.

[52] Only the summary at the end refers to "we," and that is thought to have been interpolated.

but Isocrates in his *Nicocles*, which advises the subjects of the ruler Nicocles how they should behave toward him, pretends that Nicocles is the author of the advice and has him refer to "Isocrates" in the third person as the author of a previous work (which we recognize as *To Nicocles*). The crediting of the work to Nicocles is a rhetorical ploy designed to give the impression that his subjects are receiving direct and unmediated instruction about the behavior he expects from them (*Nicocles* 11). The transference of authorship, in other words, makes the advice more effective than if it came from Isocrates.

Plutarch believed that Xenophon transferred the authorship of *Anabasis* to Themistogenes for the rhetorical purpose of making the account of his achievements plausible, too (*Moralia* 345C *de Gloria Atheniensium*): "Xenophon became his own history, writing up his generalship and his successes, and saying that these things were composed by Themistogenes of Syracuse, in order that he become more trustworthy in speaking of himself as another and in gifting away the reputation for the writing" (Ξενοφῶν μὲν γὰρ αὐτὸς ἑαυτοῦ γέγονεν ἱστορία, γράψας, ἃ ἐστρατήγησε καὶ κατώρθωσε, [καὶ] Θεμιστογένει περὶ τούτων συντετάχθαι τῷ Συρακοσίῳ, ἵνα πιστότερος ᾖ διηγούμενος ἑαυτὸν ὡς ἄλλον, ἑτέρῳ τὴν τῶν λόγων δόξαν χαριζόμενος). The theme Plutarch is illustrating is that without great men in history there are no great writers, because there are no great achievements to write about. Xenophon showed the greater importance of men in history when he chose to take up the glory of the action, giving the palm for the writing to Themistogenes. (He goes on to talk of writers who act out the parts of their generals and kings like actors in order to share their glory in performing their roles, showing again the superiority of action). Plutarch does not seem to be suggesting that Xenophon is using Themistogenes as a cover for false self-promotion (as we have seen, he considers Xenophon a truthful writer in comparison with Ctesias), but in order to objectify his achievements by making a stranger describe them. Oddly, this is a version of the "stranger's stratagem," in which the stranger is not the audience that hears the praise, but the man who does the assessing for praise and blame. Xenophon could not have hoped to deceive his audience about his authorship any more than Isocrates hoped to deceive his audience about his fiction of a trial. Both of them seem to use their stratagems to advertise the problems of speaking about the achievements of the self.

Xenophon's *Anabasis* is also the tale of misfortune that autobiography required, since it describes a journey of the utmost suffering that ends unhappily. Xenophon never returns home, even though this is what

he wants above all in the later books, because the Athenians are about to exile him for going on the expedition (7.7.57).[53] In his first major appearance in the work—during the crisis after Cunaxa when the Persians remove Clearchus and the other Greek leaders, and the army is leaderless in the midst of the enemy—he seems to forecast and explain the later reference to his exile when he describes how he ignored the warning from Socrates that the Athenians might blame him if he joined Cyrus, because Cyrus had helped Sparta subject Athens in the Peloponnesian War (3.1.4–15). This also portrays him as one who accepted responsibility for his own misfortune rather than blaming others or fate as Plato did. Introducing the self for the first time at a moment of crisis seems to be an autobiographical motif. Demosthenes also describes his first entry into public life in his *de Corona* as a reaction to crisis.[54] The effect is to provide maximum justification for the self-reference. Xenophon introduces himself in a way that is also autobiographically modest: "There was in the army an Athenian, Xenophon . . . " and he describes how he joined Cyrus in no military role, but as one of his circle of friends, and at the invitation of his friend Proxenus. He may also take up a defensive stance in explaining that neither he nor Proxenus knew that Cyrus was marching against his brother (3.1.9; they were deceived into thinking that they were joining a local war against the Pisidians): this seems to address mistaken impressions in the audience and possible criticism of their participation. Xenophon then presents his decision to take the initiative in the crisis after the death of the generals in a soliloquy, which makes it clear that he is not self-promoting, but concerned with the survival of the army; he further justifies his initiative in a dream, in which lightning strikes his father's house.[55] His age seems to require such justification. Xenophon's self-presentation thus adopts the defensive agenda as well as the tale of misfortune that autobiography seems to require.

Xenophon then presents the story of this survival as a tale of misfortune in which he leads men in fighting off the enemy as well as hunger

[53] For the importance of the theme of homecoming, see J. Ma, "You Can't Go Home Again: Displacement and Identity in Xenophon's Anabasis," in *The Long March*; P.J. Bradley, "Irony and the Narrator in Xenophon's *Anabasis*," in *Essays in Honour of Gordon Williams*, eds. E.I. Tylawsky and C.G. Weiss (New Haven, 2001), 59–84; both are reprinted in V.J. Gray, *Oxford Readings in Xenophon* (Oxford, 2009), 502–519 and 520–552.

[54] See Baslez, *L'invention de l'autobiographie*, 172, where Carlier calls his entry into *de Corona* an "epiphany."

[55] Marincola, *Authority and Tradition*, 43–61 notes how the dream is an impulse to historical writing, but here the dream is an Herodotean impulse to action.

and hypothermia, and he also adopts the autobiographical stance as the victim of criticism and misunderstanding by his own people.[56] His fellow commanders criticize him for risky military manoeuvres, and he accepts their blame but claims necessity as a defense (3.3.10 ff.); he also needs to defend himself against the charge of wanting to found a city and not take the men home (5.6), of wanting to take them back to the river Phasis (5.7), of beating men without good reason (5.8), about the lack of pay from Seuthes (7.5), of profiting from the expedition and slowing down its progress (7.6), and against misinformed Thracians (7.7.4–10). The long speeches he delivers in these episodes constitute his defensive autobiography.

The gloom continues. Xenophon is under such a cloud with the army at the end of the work that he cannot even take them their pay from Seuthes for fear of being accused of lining his own pockets, even though it is he who is mainly responsible for securing it. Wealth has also eluded him, because he tells us that he has insufficient funds even for his passage home unless he sells everything he has. In the midst of these circumstances, his comment that he had "not yet" been exiled is made more pathetic by the ignorant hope he still entertains of going home, a theme that is emphasized in the scene of sacrifice that follows the allusion to exile (7.8.1–6). Here the seer Euclides of Phlius, who used to sacrifice for Xenophon *at home*, does not at first believe that Xenophon has such little money for his passage *home*. He believes when he sees the small sacrifice he makes, however, and observes that even if wealth comes his way there will be "impediments" (more misfortune) and that he is an impediment even to himself. Xenophon ruefully agrees, but he follows his instructions to sacrifice to Propitiatory Zeus in the way of *home*, which he says he has not done since he left *home*, and he sacrifices in his *father's* way. There is some lightening of the gloom when, due perhaps to this homely sacrifice, people turn up to pay the army and bring him back a horse they know he was fond of that he had sold earlier, and they do not accept payment for it. And yet the narrative is inexorably proceeding toward the inevitability of not returning home.

Xenophon knew how to write an autobiography without incurring envy by casting himself as the victim of misfortune who is also misunderstood and wrongly criticized. He presents himself as one who served his friends and followers and showed every virtue, even though he won no

[56] There is a summary in T. Rood, "Panhellenism and Self-Presentation: Xenophon's Speeches," in *The Long March*, 323–325.

rewards and was disappointed in all his hopes. He makes Themistogenes the author, but the knowledge that he is the author gives his experiences an autobiographical hindsight, in which he examines the actions of his youthful self in a manner that bears a passing resemblance to Socratic self-examination, through which, by his own definition, a man learns the limits of his powers (*Mem*. 4.2.25–29).

Conclusion

The travel book and stories of symposia have a potential for autobiography, but there are richer pickings for the ways in which autobiography was managed in Ctesias and Xenophon, Plato and Isocrates. One prominent aspect of classical autobiography is how conscious writers are of the need to constrain their self-presentation by adopting various forms of the "stranger's stratagem." The successful autobiographer disarms the audience's natural aversion to the self-praise that was a feature of self-presentation by casting himself as a victim of misfortune and misunderstanding. It is interesting to consider how far this limited the range of the self-presentation or the kind of self that could be represented. Isocrates and others say that the defensive stance let them cover a wide range of their thoughts and achievements, and it helped define the self in relation to the views of others, but it also necessarily presents the self as a victim. Ctesias seems to have been an exception; but his self-presentation was dismissed as self-promotion, which may prove that audiences required the autobiographer to take up such a stance.

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CHAPTER TWO

ROYAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY IN THE HELLENISTIC AGE

Cinzia Bearzot

Despite both the recent claim that the absence of an individual dimension of existence in the classical age hindered the development of "autobiography" in the Greek world, shaping, at best, an autobiographical dimension rather than an autobiographical genre,[1] and the daring conclusion that "the Greeks did not write autobiographies,"[2] autobiography has had in fact a long history in Greek historiography, as Vivienne Gray has highlighted in the previous chapter.

As observed by G. Misch,[3] this literary genre lacks a specific form, and can present itself under the guise of letters, speeches, travel diaries, and memoirs, among others; thus, autobiographical traces must not be overlooked as has sometimes happened.[4] In effect, autobiographical stances have been recorded ever since Homer;[5] despite the fact that the Greek cultural milieu (and the Athenian in particular) does not itself seem to favor the emergence of a strongly autobiographical focus due to the prevalence of the public over the individual dimension, in Greek

[1] M. Trédé-Boulmer, "La Grèce antique a-t-elle connu l'autobiographie?" in *L'invention de l'autobiographie d'Hésiode à Augustin*, eds. M.-F. Baslez, P. Hoffmann, and L. Pernot (Paris, 1993), 13–20.

[2] J. Geiger, *Cornelius Nepos and Ancient Political Biography* Historia Einzelschriften 47 (Stuttgart, 1985), 79; contra J. Engels, "Die Hypomnemata-Schriften und die Anfänge der politischen Biographie und Autobiographie in der griechischen Literatur," *ZPE* 96 (1993), 19–36.

[3] Misch, *Autobiography*, 1:1 ff.; for a wider perspective, not limited to the ancients, see also G. Niggl, "Zur Theorie der Autobiographie" in *Antike Autobiographien: Werke—Epochen—Gattungen*, ed. M. Reichel (Cologne, 2005), 1–13.

[4] G. Camassa, "La biografia" in *Lo spazio letterario della Grecia antica*, 1:3, *I Greci e Roma*, eds. G. Cambiano, L. Canfora, and D. Lanza, (Rome, 1994), 303–332, 303–304.

[5] B. Gentili and G. Cerri, *Storia e biografia nel pensiero antico* (Rome, 1983), 77 ff.; B. Zimmermann, "Anfänge der Autobiographie in der griechischen Literatur," in *Die griechische Biographie in hellenistischer Zeit*, eds. M. Erler and S. Schorn (Berlin, 2007), 3–9.

fifth-century literary history autobiography is already significantly present, although not yet a precisely defined and well-established literary genre.[6]

In effect, rarity of autobiographical writing in Greece[7] undoubtedly derives from the "public" nature of the classical way of life, which does not foster the development of individual-centered literature.[8] Greater interest in the contribution of the individual (with his/her cultural background and approach) to political, social, and cultural life and to historical events arises instead, and not by chance, in the fourth century, as the individual dimension gradually imposes itself to the detriment of the collective. To be precise, however, this is still an age of transition in which individual historical figures do progressively emerge, albeit with their merely public image (profession, political community, and school of thought).[9]

In the Hellenistic age, the decline of the *polis* is accompanied by increasing interest in the individual dimension of life, a new milieu in which the autobiographical genre thrives; yet, despite the spreading of subjectivity and the increasing importance attributed to the private sphere of the individual, it must be remembered that autobiography is still a genre reserved for exceptional persons who play an active role in politics and literature and occupy key positions in society. In effect, extant material testifies to the shift of literary autobiographical perspectives from adherence to well-acknowledged models (the "good citizen" arising from Isocrates' *Antidosis* and in Lycurgus) to claims of "extraordinariness" on the part of some key historical figures.[10] Thus, in other words, the link between the emergence of "autobiography" and a newly established focus on daily individual life, which is indeed reflected in Hellenistic literature and the arts, does not prove as amply representative as it might appear.[11]

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[6] Momigliano, *Biography*, 23–42; on reservations about an insufficiently precise definition of the concept of biography/autobiography, see Engels, "Die Hypomnemata-Schriften," 20–21; cf. also H. Sonnabend, *Geschichte der antiken Biographie. Von Isokrates bis zur Historia Augusta* (Stuttgart, 2002), 60.

[7] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2B, *Kommentar*, 639–640.

[8] K. Meister, "Autobiographische Literatur und Memoiren (Hypomnemata) (FGrHist 227–238)," in *Purposes of History. Studies in Greek Historiography from the 4th to the 2nd Centuries B.C.*, eds. H. Verdin, G. Schepens, and E. de Keyser (Leuven, 1990), 83–89, 83.

[9] Momigliano, *Biography*, 48–49.

[10] Trédé-Boulmer, "Autobiographie," 20.

[11] F.B. Titchener, "Autobiography and the Hellenistic Age," in *The Eye Expanded. Life and the Arts in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, F.B. Titchener and R.F. Moorton, Jr. (Berkeley, 1999), 155–163, 162.

Evidence to this conclusion derives not only from observing that in the preserved, albeit not numerous, autobiographies, there is no trace of the private halo characteristic of (significantly more prolific) Roman autobiography,[12] but also from the fact that Hellenistic autobiographical material mostly results in self-portrayals of intellectuals, or of both politicians and kings who thereby account for and justify (or exalt) their actions. It is exactly such an evident propagandistic feature[13] that led Arnaldo Momigliano to speak of the apologetic monopolization of autobiographical writing on the part of kings and politicians in the Hellenistic age.[14]

The in-depth investigation of the debate on Greek biography and autobiography, which has witnessed the clash of the conflicting views of Friedrich Leo and Arnaldo Momigliano,[15] is beyond the scope of the present study; let it suffice to highlight here that, while in the classical age the existence of properly autobiographical texts—that is, having the explicit aim of preserving the memory of significant events in one's life—can be disputed, the existence of autobiographical writings in the Hellenistic age cannot instead be reasonably denied. Evidence to this assertion is the emergence of a specific branch in memoir writing, the *hypomnemata* (lt. *commentarii*), drafted by generals, politicians, and kings, as natural in a historical, political, and social context in which great monarchies play a key role.[16]

Interestingly, *hypomnemata* were strictly tied to both the tradition of historical monographs of great figures on the one hand, and to *ephemerides*, court journals, on the other, in a not always easy-to-discern relation, often also due to lexical ambiguity. In effect, *hypomnemata* were originally "notes" to aid the memory in which content tended to prevail over form, and they identified material lacking literary pretension to be stylistically embellished by historians eventually resorting to it;[17] more generally, however, the term *hypomnemata* can have positive or negative overtones and covers quite a wide semantic area ranging from

[12] P. Scholz, "Autobiographien hellenistischer Herrscher und republikanischer nobiles—'Ein Unterschied der Volksindividualität'?" in *Die griechische Biographie in hellenistischer Zeit*, eds. M. Erler and S. Schorn (Berlin, 2007), 385–405, 396 ff.

[13] Sonnabend, *Geschichte der antiken Biographie*, 79.

[14] Momigliano, *Biography*, 103–104.

[15] On this debate, see Camassa, "La biografia," 313 ff.; Sonnabend, *Geschichte der antiken Biographie*, 17 ff.

[16] Misch, *Autobiography*, 177 ff.; Momigliano, *Biography*, 89 ff.; Camassa, "La biografia," 324–325; Sonnabend, *Geschichte der antiken Biographie*, 79–80.

[17] Engels, "Die Hypomnemata-Schriften," 26.

mere notes from the royal chancellery to proper historiographic works.[18] Furthermore, apart from shared apologetic traits identified by Misch (self-justification as necessary, accusation of others, trumpeting of one's own merits, attacks against enemies, silence in regard to obscure issues, defense against calumnies and even against justified attacks),[19] available documentation attests several discrepancies among *hypomnemata*, which therefore do not configure themselves as descending from a uniform literary genre, but are rather strongly individually characterized in both form and content[20] and in several cases invested of relevant historical value.[21]

While literary examples of *hypomnemata* comprise, among others, the apology of Demetrius Phalereus (*On the Ten Years*), the *Memoirs* written by Aratus of Sicyon, and the apology written by the Rhodian *strategos* Theodorus,[22] a significant part of our documents revolves around kings in particular. In the absence of models (excluding monumental inscriptions of the Near East, of Mesopotamic and Achaemenid areas), these documents which undoubtedly constitute a key chapter in the self-representation of kings exhibit a significant variety of forms: letters, diaries, and court journals, memoirs, inscriptions, and even proper historiographic works.

1. Autobiographical Letters

Letters of autobiographical value[23] are attributed to Alexander, Antipater, Antigonus Monophthalmus, and Ptolemy I. Some of these letters were collected in different volumes; it must be noted that in these cases genuine material cannot always be distinguished from non-authentic documents.

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[18] D. Ambaglio, "Fra hypomnemata e storiografia," *Athenaeum* 68 (1990), 503–508; see now G. Cuniberti, "Hypomnemata in Suda: genere letterario, fonte lessicografica, FGrHist 227–238," in *Gli storici greci in frammenti e il lessico Suda* (Atti dell'Incontro internazionale, Vercelli 6–8 Novembre 2008), ed. G. Vanotti, forthcoming.

[19] Misch, *Autobiography*, 204–205. On the apologetic nature of autobiography, see also S. Mazzarino, *Il pensiero storico classico*, 2 vols., parts 1–2 (Bari, 1974), 2.1:27 ff.

[20] Meister, "Autobiographische Literatur," 83–89.

[21] Engels, "Die Hypomnemata-Schriften," 26 ff.

[22] Meister, "Autobiographische Literatur und Memoiren (Hypomnemata) (FGrHist 227–238)," 84 ff.; Sonnabend, *Geschichte der antiken Biographie*, 80–81; Scholz, "Autobiographien hellenistischer Herrscher und republikanischer nobiles—'Ein Unterschied der Volksindividualität'?" 387 ff.

[23] On letters as autobiographical genre, see Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2B, *Kommentar*, 656–657.

In effect, these documents, among which the most trustworthy may be traced back to *hypomnemata* and *ephemerides*—thus to royal archives—must have been deemed worthy of collection and diffusion, evidently for their historical, biographical, and autobiographical value; yet, simultaneously, the process of collection itself must have also favored the insertion of non-genuine material.

Alexander

According to our sources, Alexander wrote and received numerous letters, of both official and personal nature. It is not clear to what extent they were collected: some letters, such as those to Chios (Rhodes-Osborne 84) and to Priene (Rhodes-Osborne 86)[24] were published on stone; others were quoted, at times even literally, by secondary tradition, even though it is difficult to assess the accuracy of such quotations, and whether they derive from earlier historians (whose mode of access to original documents is not always discernible) or epistolary collections.[25]

Plutarch, who seems to acknowledge the existence of an Alexandrine epistolary corpus, mentions about thirty letters of the king.[26] In particular, three passages in the *Life of Alexander* (17.8, 60.1, 60.11) refer to what Alexander himself (*autos*) writes *en tais epistolais*. According to Nicholas Hammond, these *epistolai* could refer to a collection of letters whose existence is confirmed by papyrus documents; furthermore, several letters in the collection were probably non-genuine, but documents should in any case derive from royal *ephemerides*, from which they were perhaps extracted by epitomators/commentators like Strattis of Olynthus (*FGrHist* 118).[27]

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[24] P.J. Rhodes and R. Osborne, *Greek Historical Inscriptions, 404–323 BC* (Oxford, 2003).

[25] L. Pearson, "The Diary and the Letters of Alexander the Great," *Historia* 3 (1954–1955), 429–455, 443 ff.

[26] J.R. Hamilton, "The Letters in Plutarch's Alexander," *PACA* 4 (1961), 9–20; ibid., Plutarch, *Alexander. A Commentary* (Oxford, 1969), LIX–LX; N.G.L. Hammond, *Sources for Alexander the Great. An Analysys of Plutarch's Life and Arrian's Anabasis Alexandrou* (Oxford, 1993), 159 ff.

[27] Hammond, *Sources*, 157 ff., 161–162. See P. Pédech, *Historiens compagnons d'Alexandre. Callisthène, Onésicrite, Néarque, Ptolémée, Aristobule* (Paris, 1984), 246 ff., 248–249; P.A. Brunt, in Arrian, *History of Alexander and Indica*, 2 vols. (London, 1976–1983), 1:xxvi–xxvii and 2:528 ff.; Plutarch, *Alexander*, ed. Hamilton, lix n. 1, warns that some of the letters exchanged between Alexander and Antipater could derive from Antipater's epistolary collection; on this issue, see *infra*.

In effect, some of the letters written or received by Alexander and mentioned by Arrian, our most trustworthy source, are "service notes" most probably traceable back to official documents: this is the case of Alexander's letter to the Athenians, which demanded the handing over of the democratic orators (*Anab.* 1.10.4),[28] of Ptolemy and Asander's letter informing Alexander of their victory over the Persian Orontobates (333), which also contains data on losses and prisoners (*Anab.* 2.5.7), and of Philoxenos' letter informing the king, who was traveling from Babylon to Susa (331), of the surrender of Susa and of its treasures (3.16.6).

In some cases the intermediation of literary sources, which is likely for Arrian who does not seem to be aware of the existence of epistolary collections,[29] is more evident. To mention a few examples: Olympias' and Antipater's correspondence with Alexander, in which the queen and the regent ruler level strong accusations at each other (*Anab.* 7.12.6–7), blends a definite political intent with more private hues: since, as noted, private correspondence was scarcely collectable and retrievable,[30] the reference to these letters and their contextualization could derive from well-informed literary sources like Ptolemy or Aristobulus.[31] Similarly, Alexander's letter to Cleomenes of Naucratis on the honors to be deserved to Hephaistion (323), partially literally quoted by Arrian (*Anab.* 7.23.6–8), has been traced back to Ptolemy; about this letter in particular scholars have hypothesized either an anti-Cleomenes falsification on the part of Ptolemy, or even a re-elaboration of the original text by Arrian:[32] if the letter is to be considered substantially genuine, one should mind the fact that, as known, Ptolemy widely employed *ephemerides*,[33] thus both sources (the *ephemerides* and the literary work) are not to be considered alternative. Finally, a particularly controversial example refers to the epistolary exchange between Darius and Alexander after Issos (Arr., *Anab.*

[28] On authenticity, see A.B. Bosworth, *A Historical Commentary on Arrian's History of Alexander*, 2 vols. (Oxford 1980–1995), 1:93.

[29] Pearson, "The Diary," 449–450; Brunt, in Arrian, *History of Alexander and Indica*, 2:533.

[30] Plutarch, *Alexander*, ed. Hamilton, LIX n. 1.

[31] [F. Sisti], A. Zambrini, in Arrian, *Anabasi di Alessandro*, 2 vols. (Milan, 2001–2004), 2:609. The letters exchanged with Antipater might ultimately derive from the regent ruler's epistolary collection, which is attested by different sources (see *infra*).

[32] Bibliography in [Sisti], Zambrini, in Arrian, *Anabasi di Alessandro*, 2:645–646.

[33] Pédech, *Historiens compagnons d'Alexandre*, 242 ff.

2.14–12.15.1): Alexander's letter, which Arrian cites literally (*Anab.* 2., 14.4–9) and which reads as a propaganda manifesto, has been attributed by some scholars to Callisthenes.[34]

It is hard to identify the letters that may have had specific autobiographical significance; in one case at least, however, we know of a precise autobiographical intervention on the part of Alexander on his own epistolary corpus. In detail, in October 326, before returning from India, the king is believed to have initially written to his mother, Olympias, to let her know that he thought he had found the sources of the Nile; afterward, however, having obtained further information, he changed his opinion and is believed to have intervened in the text of the letter:

> It is reported that, when writing to Olympias about the Indian country, Alexander wrote among other things that he thought he had discovered the springs of the Nile, drawing a conclusion about matters of so much importance from very slender indications; but that, when he had more accurately investigated the geography of the river Indus, he learnt from the inhabitants that the Hydaspes joins its stream to the Acesines and the Acesines to the Indus, and that they resign their names, while the Indus then flows out into the Great Sea by two mouths and has nothing whatever to do with Egypt, and as a result he cancelled the part of the letter to his mother which dealt with the Nile.[35] (Arr., *Anab.* 6.1.4–5)

As noted, in this passage, Arrian reports that Alexander corrected the letter and omitted the part on the discovery of the sources of the Nile.

Debate has focused on whether Alexander sent his mother two different letters, one following the other,[36] or merely corrected a draft of the letter.[37] By using the verb *aphaireo*, the passage in Arrian undoubtedly points to the hypothesis of a correction;[38] in this respect, I am inclined to believe that such a correction was probably made in the chancellery copy to be preserved after the actual letter had already been sent. In effect, if this letter, as others, ultimately derives, via the intermediation of a source that scholars seem to identify with Nearchos,[39] from the *ephemerides* in which the *grammateus* Eumenes of Cardia took notes of *grammata*, that

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[34] Bibliography in Bosworth, *Arrian's History of Alexander*, 1:227 ff.; Sisti, [Zambrini], in Arrian, *Anabasi di Alessandro*, 1:436 ff.; P.A. Brunt, in Arrian, *History of Alexander and Indica*, 1:XXVII suggests its paternity is traceable to Arrian; Hammond, *Sources*, 158 is in favor of authenticity.

[35] Translation by Brunt. Arrian, *History of Alexander and Indica*, 2 vols.

[36] Hammond, *Sources*, 263 n. 5.

[37] Brunt, in Arrian, *History of Alexander and Indica*, 2:103 n. 3.

[38] [Sisti], Zambrini, in Arrian, *Anabasi di Alessandro*, 2:519.

[39] Brunt, in Arrian, *History of Alexander and Indica*, 2:103 n. 3.

is, of all the documents regarding the king (Plut., *Eum*. 2.6–7), then it may be suggested that having realized his mistake, Alexander must have wished to remove such an error from the text destined to be collected in the royal archives—whose contents he was particularly intent on preserving, as proven by the fact that when Eumenes' tent was destroyed by fire, Alexander ordered his satraps and *strategoi* to send him the *antigrapha* of the documents that had been lost. If then Alexander removed his mistake from the archival copy of the letter to his mother, it is clear that he attributed relevant documentary value, even in autobiographical terms, to the epistolary documents connected to him; it is thus also clear that via his royal archives Alexander did not intend to hand down to history a not-fully positive image of himself.

Antipater

The existence of a collection of Antipater's letters (*FGrHist* 114) is attested in one of the two entries that the Suda devotes to him (A 2703).[40] The entry consists of two independent parts (lines 1–11 and 11–21).[41] The first part reflects Hesychius' model, which characterizes the entries dedicated to men of culture,[42] insofar as it mentions Antipater's name, patronymic (son of Iollas), ethnicity (from the Macedonian city of Paliura), profession (general of Philip, then of Alexander, diadochus), discipleship (disciple of Aristotle), and pertinent bibliographic information (a collection of letters, *epistolon syngramma*, in two books and a history of Perdiccas' Illyrian campaigns). The second part mentions two episodes in Antipater's life, both tied to the figure of Alexander, and concludes reporting the fact that he died in 79 and left his son Cassander as his heir.

Considering that Antipater's historical and literary activity is unknown to the rest of tradition, which only reports his military, political and administrative enterprises, Franca Landucci[43] has attempted to demonstrate that the information displayed in the abovementioned entry derives from an error, either made by Hesychius (the probable source of

[40] The other is A 2704.

[41] A. Adler, in *Suidae Lexicon*, 5 vols. (Leipzig, 1928–1938), ad loc.

[42] M. Giangiulio, "Storici greci di età arcaica e classica," in *Il lessico Suda e la memoria del passato a Bisanzio*, ed. G. Zecchini (Bari, 1999), 89–99.

[43] F. Landucci, "Il caso di Antipatro," 27–33 in C. Bearzot and F. Landucci, "I Diadochi e la Suda," *Aevum* 76 (2002), 25–47 (= *Praktika XI Diethnous Synedriou Klassikon Spoudon* [Kavala], 24–30 [August, 1999]) (Athens, 2002), 120–129.

the Suda) or already present in earlier tradition—in any case, let it be noticed that the entry undoubtedly contains at least an error, specifically about the fact that Antipater might be among Aristotle's disciples, which is unlikely since the philosopher was almost twenty years younger than Antipater. According to Landucci, misinformation about Antipater's literary activity is due to having mistaken *this* Antipater for Antipater of Magnesia, historian *aliter ignotus*, author of *Hellenika*, sent to Macedonia as the bearer of a letter by Speusippos to Philip II, which can be dated back to 343/2 BC and held to be genuine.[44] In this respect, I am strongly in favor of the hypothesis of a mix-up between *our* Antipater and the unknown pro-Macedonian historian, especially with regard to Perdiccas' Illyrian campaigns (probably Perdiccas III, Philip II's elder brother who died fighting against the Illyrians); considering the collection of letters as a whole, instead, there may be other possible explanations.

In effect, the entry of the Suda is not the only source mentioning Antipater's letters: Cicero (*De off.* 2 14.48) affirms that *extant epistulae Philippi ad Alexandrum et Antipatri ad Cassandrum et Antigoni ad Philippum filium*; Plutarch (*Comp. Alc. et Cor.* 3) cites a brief extract from a letter by Antipater on Aristotle's death; Aelianus (*Vh* 14.1) recalls part of a letter by Aristotle to Antipater on the Delphic honors that had been granted to the former and then canceled.[45] On these bases, Felix Jacoby[46] favors the hypothesis of the existence of an epistolary collection of the diadochus, this even for the difficulty of explaining falsifications (Jacoby seems actually inclined to acknowledge as genuine even the work on Perdiccas' Illyrian campaigns of which Antipater might have been an eye witness). The collection could indeed have been arranged with material from the Macedonian royal house archive mentioned by Lucian (*Encom. Demosth.* 10), which also preserved the recording of the activity of Antipater as the regent.[47]

Whether, then, this epistolary collection had any autobiographical value is hard to say on the basis of extant information. It has been suggested that the collection might have been published under Antigonus Gonatas, grandson of Antipater on his mother's side;[48] yet, let it be

[44] *Status quaestionis* in A.F. Natoli, *The Letter of Speusippus to Philip II. Introduction, Text, Translation and Commentary*, Historia Einzelschriften 176 (Stuttgart, 2004).

[45] On this passage, see L. Prandi, *Memorie storiche dei Greci in Claudio Eliano* (Rome, 2005), 139–140.

[46] *FGrHist* 2B, *Kommentar*, 351.

[47] *Infra*, 57.

[48] Hamilton, "The Letters," 10–11; Plutarch, *Alexander*, ed. Hamilton, lix n. 1.

remembered that Antigonid historiographic tradition, as expressed by Hieronymus of Cardia, himself active at the court of Antigonus Gonatas, was far from favorable to Antipater, thus I hold it quite unlikely that material undoubtedly not devoid of propagandistic value could find there and then favorable context for publication.[49] The possibility cannot be ruled out, thus, that the epistolary collection might have been edited by Antipater himself, whose relations with the Peripatetic Circle are well known, or by his son Cassander with self-justifying and propagandistic aims: the latter, in particular, who was the addressee of the letter mentioned by Cicero, might have been interested in making available his father's letters to counterbalance Antigonid propaganda, which in the days of the so-called "Tyre proclamation" presented Antipater, and Cassander above all, as traitors of the Argeads.

Ptolemy

Almost nothing is known about the collection of Ptolemy I's letters, which, according to Lucian (*Pro lapsu inter salutandum* 10), is believed to have been edited by Dionysodorus, Dionysodorus of Troezene, that is, the grammarian disciple of Aristarchus of Samos in the second half of the second century.[50] The passage by Lucian mentions a letter of Ptolemy to Seleucus in which the king is believed to have used the greeting formula *chairein* not at the beginning, as was usual, but rather at the end of the letter; the source of this piece of information is the abovementioned Dionysodorus, defined *ho tas epistolas autou synagagon*. As known, Aristarchus, the master of Dionysodorus, was also the master of Ptolemy VIII, the author of autobiographical *hypomnemata*. These elements provide further evidence about the fact that the second-century Alexandrine milieu was deeply interested in autobiography, and the collection of Ptolemy Soter's letters is thus pertinent to this context.

On the basis of information about letters by Alexander, Antipater, and Ptolemy, Arnaldo Momigliano[51] has hypothesized that the Macedonians must have had a special predilection for autobiographical letters as a literary genre; in this respect, he mentions the fact that Scipio Africanus Maior, himself the author of an autobiographical letter addressed to Philip V on his own Spanish enterprises cited in Polybius

[49] On the *status quaestionis*, see Diodoro Siculo, *Biblioteca storica. Libro XVIII. Commento storico*, ed. F. Landucci, (Milan, 2008), xii ff.

[50] F. Montanari, "Dionysodoros," (6), *NP* 3 (1997), 650.

[51] Momigliano, *Biography*, 91–92.

(10.9.3), must have taken the consolidated Hellenistic tradition as a model. This hypothesis cannot be ascertained; however, Macedonian kings were undoubtedly particularly intent on preserving their own personal historical record even, as will be seen, with respect to *hypomnemata*; the fact that Cicero mentions a letter of Antigonus Monoftalmus to his eldest son Philip also seems to confirm that Macedonian kings wished to leave some traces of their own activity by means of epistolary material.[52]

2. Diaries: Alexander, the Ptolemies, and the Macedonian Kings

It seems to have been common practice for Hellenistic kings to keep daily diaries to be preserved in archives by a secretary; in some cases, these documents would then be shaped into literary material by professional writers. This activity is believed to have been typically Macedonian in origin, dating back to Philip II at the least: Nepos (*FGrHist* 117 T2b) affirms for instance that Eumenes, a close friend of Philip's ever since early youth, had been a *scriba* (corresponding to Greek *grammateus)* at the latter's court for seven years, and that, after the latter's death, he had been a secretary even under Alexander's reign for thirteen years.[53] In this respect, it must be noted that some scholars are even inclined to predate this practice, going much further back than Philip II's reign, to reach Alexander I's in particular.[54]

Let me add here that the investigation of diaries as a *genre* requires to distinguish the semantic range of the terms *ephemerides* and *hypomnemata*, both used, with *grammata*, to indicate royal archives;[55] however, while in the case of Alexander this is still possible, it is actually harder to make clear-cut distinctions when dealing with his successors.

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[52] This study does not investigate the possible autobiographical value of some letters of kings preserved by inscriptions (C.B. Welles, *Royal Correspondence in the Hellenistic Period. A Study in the Hellenistic Epigraphy* [New Haven, 1934]).

[53] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 403, 404 (which however does not rule out influences from the East).

[54] N.G.L. Hammond, "The Royal Journal of Alexander," *Historia* 37 (1988), 129–150, 130–131, 134; ibid., *The Macedonian State* (Oxford, 1989) 187 ff.; contra E.M. Anson, "The Ephemerides of Alexander the Great," *Historia* 45 (1996), 501–504 (the keeping of archives is to be connected with the Macedonian adoption of Persian customs). Following Hammond, L. Prandi, "Il monarca greco," in *Lo storico antico: mestieri e figure sociali*, ed. G. Zecchini, Bari 2010, 53–64, 55.

[55] Hammond, "Royal Journal," 130–131.

Alexander's Ephemerides *and* Hypomnemata

Alexander's *ephemerides* (more precisely, *hai basilikoi ephemerides*; *FGrHist* 117 F3 a = Arr., *Anab.* 7.25.1)[56] were a daily "journal" of the activity of the king and of his court kept throughout his reign by the *grammateus*, Eumenes of Cardia, and Diodotus of Erythrae (*FGrHist* 117 T1)[57]—Diodotus must have either taken Eumenes' place, as the latter could no longer be the royal secretary[58] having been appointed as *hipparchos* to replace Perdiccas after Hephaestion's death, or perhaps have worked alongside with Eumenes, since Nepos affirms that Diodotus kept his position at the court for thirteen years, thus covering the whole of Alexander's reign.

Three fragments of the *ephemerides* have been preserved. They recount, in the singular third person, Alexander's hunting (F1) and drinking (F2) habits; the most interesting document is however F3, which narrates the king's last days and the progression of his illness, and has been preserved both by Arrian (*Anab.* 7.25.1 ff.)—as a definitely narrative piece, thus with the possible mediation of Ptolemy, and by Plutarch (*Alex.* 76–77.1)—who claims to be quoting the *ephemerides* almost literally (*katà lexin*), thus furnishing a more stylized piece, possibly much closer to the "bare" original text.[59]

There is no agreement on the origin of these fragments, and different interpretive strands seem to emerge. Some scholars believe that the fragments might derive not from the original text (which was lost in the burning of Eumenes' tent; Plut. *Eum.* 2.6–7), but rather from a fictitious Hellenistic work, perhaps by Strattis of Olynthus (*FGrHist* 118).[60] Other

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[56] This term is rather uncommon and means, according to the Suda s.v. "Ephemeris," *ton kath'hemeran sympiptonton apographé*.

[57] N.G.L. Hammond, "A Papyrus Commentary on Alexander's Balkan Campaign," *GRBS* (1987), 331–347.

[58] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 405.

[59] In Pédech, *Historiens compagnons d'Alexandre*, 249–250, and A.B. Bosworth, *From Arrian to Alexander* (Oxford, 1988), 157 ff.; contra Pearson, "The Diary," 429 ff.; Plutarch, *Alexander*, ed. Hamilton, 210 ff.; Brunt, in Arrian, *History of Alexander and Indica*, 2:288 ff.

[60] Pearson, "The Diary," 436–437. The possibility that the three surviving fragments derive from Strattis is admitted also by Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 403; a fragment of Strattis appears to have been preserved in a papyrus document about Alexander's Illyrian campaign (Hammond, "A Papyrus Commentary," 331–347). On the elusive nature of Stratttis' work, considered either an epitomator/commentator of the *ephemerides*, or a falsificator, and placed in different chronological settings, see Bosworth, *From Arrian to Alexander*, 181–182.

scholars sustain that Alexander never kept a diary, and that the fragments that cover the last span of his life should thus derive from works (by Eumenes, Diodotus, Strattis) drawing on Babylonian accounts, which provided dating elements, most significantly national events and up-to-date information on the king's health[61]—yet, as has been observed, this kind of accounts could hardly have been the site to discuss of Alexander's hunting and drinking habits.[62] A further group of scholars acknowledge, though in different degree, the authenticity of the *ephemerides*:[63] in effect, after the burning of Eumenes' tent, Alexander was intent on rebuilding the royal archive—whose contents he was particularly committed to preserving, as proven by the fact that he ordered to be sent copies of the documents that had been destroyed[64]—which after his death was probably collected with the *apographé* of Bematists (*FGrHist* 119 T3)[65] in the royal treasure, the *gazophylakion*. Despite the diversity of position on this aspect,[66] scholars agree that Alexander's royal archive must have been accessible in this form to historical figures like Ptolemy. In any case, even acknowledging the authenticity of the *ephemerides* as daily accounts of the activity of the king and his court, Jacoby's opinion is still noteworthy: according to him, due to the vast amount of information contained in the diaries, their publication in an abridged, rather than integral, form, perhaps edited by Diodotus,[67] seems more likely.

Much critical debate has centered on the contents of Alexander's *ephemerides*, in the attempt to establish whether they were day-to-day accounts of official acts and news (royal provisions, letters received and sent, accounts of diplomatic missions, reports on stops, troop levels,

[61] A.E. Samuel, "Alexander's Royal Journals," *Historia* 14 (1965), 1–2.

[62] Plutarch, *Alexander*, ed. Hamilton, 59–60.

[63] Hammond, "Royal Journal," 129–150; N.G.L. Hammond, "A Note on Royal Journals," *Historia* 40 (1991), 382–384. Bosworth, *From Arrian to Alexander*, 157 ff., holds the *ephemerides* to be genuine, drafted by Eumenes after Alexander's death for propagandistic reasons, and aimed at denying the rumours of Alexander's poisoning; this, then, rules out the notion of both an actual archive and of deliberate falsification. However, see Hammond, "Royal Journal," 135–136.

[64] Prandi, "Il monarca greco," 56.

[65] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 404.

[66] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 404; Pédech, *Historiens compagnons d'Alexandre*, 250–251. According to Hammond, the fact that the archive would usually follow the king leads to think that Ptolemy must have taken Alexander's archive and corpse and brought the former to Alexandria; the royal archive, as preserved in the Library, was then likely accessible to the authors that drew from it, from Strattis to Arrian, Plutarch, Athenaeus and Aelianus (Hammond, "Royal Journal," 134–135, 147).

[67] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 403.

casualties, prisoners, religious and administrative acts) or also private in nature (containing, for instance, the account of Alexander's personal occupations). Subject to the abovementioned reservations, preserved fragments seem to support the second hypothesis;[68] in any case, the *ephemerides* have been a source of particularly significant data for historians. In this respect, scholars are inclined to believe that Alexander's *ephemerides* were widely employed by Ptolemy, who must have drawn information either from their original or an abridged version; furthermore, echoes thereof have also been found in the works of Arrian, particularly in passages characterized by such precision and details that the protagonists of the recounted events themselves, like Ptolemy, would hardly have been able to recall without the aid of Alexander's diaries.[69]

As for the autobiographical nature of Alexander's *ephemerides*, the king must have drafted them with the intention of providing an especially truthful account of his enterprises,[70] and of handing down to history a precisely sketched "picture" of himself—as for instance proven by his intervention in the letter to Olympias on the sources of the Nile (discussed above) which was preserved in the royal archives among the daily accounts. However, differently from other kings (Pyrrhus for example), Alexander did not himself undertake to shape his *ephemerides* as clearly historiographic documents; thus, they remained merely documentary material, destined to be preserved by successors and to be of key relevance to those wishing to draft historical works on Alexander and his enterprises.

Furthermore, in the case of Alexander's documents, the term *hypomnemata*, at times employed as a synonym of *ephemerides*, seems to be connoted by a distinctive meaning. Diodorus (18.4.2–6) reports that Craterus was sent to Cilicia with written orders from the king (which the successors prevented him to carry out), and adds:

> For when Perdiccas found in the memoranda of the kings (*en tois hypomnemasi tou basileos*) orders for the completing of the pyre of Hephaestion, which required a great deal of money, and also for the other designs of Alexander, which were many and great and called for an unprecedented outlay he decided that it was inexpedient to carry them out. But that he

[68] Hammond, "Royal Journal," 131–132.

[69] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 403–404; Pédech, *Historiens compagnons d'Alexandre*, 246 ff. On the relation between Ptolemy's and Arrian's works, Bosworth holds a different opinion, *From Arrian to Alexander*, 183 and n. 106.

[70] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 404.

> might not appear to be arbitrarily detracting anything from the glory of Alexander, he laid these matters before the common assembly of the Macedonians for consideration.
>
> The following were the largest and most remarkable items of the memoranda. It was proposed to build a thousand warships, larger than triremes, in Phoenicia, Syria, Cilicia, and Cyprus for the campaign against the Carthaginians and the others who live along the coast of Libya and Iberia and the adjoining coastal region as far as Sicily; to make a road along the coast of Libya as far as the Pillars of Heracles and, as needed by so great an expedition, to construct ports and shipyards at suitable places; to erect six most costly temples, each at an expense of fifteen hundred talents; and, finally, to establish cities and to transplant populations from Asia to Europe and in the opposite direction from Europe to Asia, in order to bring the largest continents to common unity and to friendly kinship by means of intermarriages and family ties. The temples mentioned above were to be built at Delos, Delphi, and Dodona, and in Macedonia a temple to Zeus at Dium, to Artemis Tauropolos at Amphipolis, and to Athena at Cyrnus. Likewise at Ilium in honor of this goddess there was to be built a temple that could never be surpassed by any other. A tomb for his father Philip was to be constructed to match the greatest of the pyramids of Egypt, buildings which some persons count among the seven greatest works of man. When these memoranda had been read, the Macedonians, although they applauded the name of Alexander, nevertheless saw that the projects were extravagant and impracticable and decided to carry out none of those that have been mentioned.[71]

Here Perdiccas follows the Macedonian practice of the public reading of the king's will for the approval of his last wishes,[72] in this case expressed in the "king's *hypomnemata*": these comprise Alexander's last projects, that is, besides the completion of Hephaestion's tomb and the building of Philip's funeral monument, the conquest of the West, the building of temples in several sites, the sinecisms of cities and the transfer of populations aimed at unifying the empire.

Modern scholars have been hesitant to acknowledge the authenticity of these projects, at least in the form in which they were reported by Diodorus; in this, they follow in the wake of Arrian (*Anab.* 7.1.1–4), who reports the plans of the king regarding Arabia and the West (Northern Africa and Sicily) and the area of Pontus Euxinus and of Scythia as

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[71] Translation by R.M. Geer, ed., "Diodorus of Sicily," in *Books XVIII and XIX 1–65*, 9 (Cambridge, Mass., 1947).

[72] M. Hatzopoulos, *Macedonian Institutions under the Kings*, (Meletemata) 22, 2 vols. (Athens, 1996), 1:294–295.

legomena, a term which proves that he could not find mention of these plans in the best tradition.[73]

In this respect, as stated by Bosworth, the sole criterion for the assessment of the authenticity of reported events is confirmation in other branches of tradition. Thus, in detail: the plan of a campaign against the Carthaginians is confirmed by Arrian (*Anab.* 7.1.2–3); this project is to be included in Alexander's so-called Western interests, which comprise the controversial diplomatic missions that different Western civilizations (the Romans included) are believed to have sent to the Macedonian court. Apart from the case of Ilion (Strab. 13.1.26), the projects on temples lack precise confirmation; however, Plutarch (*Mor.* 343d), like Diodorus, mentions ten thousand talents from the Persian treasure to be destined to the building of temples.[74] Finally, the reference to sinecisms and population transfers is held to be plausible (yet not rigorously confirmed) by considering the fact that Alexander's last years are marked by the founding of several cities and by numerous settlements of veterans in areas different from their birthplaces. Thus, Bosworth's analysis identifies "a surprising unanimity" in tradition which leads him to conclude that Alexander's last plans as presented by Diodorus "are reliably reported and historically invaluable."[75]

With regard to *ephemerides*, which Endres[76] identified with *hypomnemata*, and despite the fact that in Diodorus *hypomnemata* seems to have a more limited and technical meaning substantially equivalent to *epibolai*,[77] 'plans', it cannot be excluded that the real *ephemerides* would actually deal with (at least some of) Alexander's plans. In effect, in the narration of the king's illness (whose relation to the *ephemerides* was discussed above), Arrian (*Anab.* 7.25.4) mentions the circumnavigation of Arabia, which Alexander was still intent on preparing in his last days.[78] For this reason, I would not exclude the possibility that the king's plans could

[73] Bibliography in [Sisti], Zambrini, in Arrian, *Anabasi di Alessandro*, 2:479 ff.

[74] M. Mari, *Al di là dell'Olimpo. Macedoni e grandi santuari della Grecia dall'età arcaica al primo Ellenismo*, (Meletemata) 34 (Athens, 2002), 249 ff.

[75] Bosworth, *From Arrian to Alexander*, 185 ff., 211. For further bibliography, see Diodoro Siculo, *Biblioteca storica. Libro XVIII*, ed. Landucci, 42 ff.

[76] H. Endres, "Krateros, Perdikkas und die letzten Pläne Alexanders," *RhM* 72 (1917–1918), 437–445.

[77] Ambaglio, "Fra hypomnemata e storiografia," 507; see D. Ambaglio, "Hypomnema in Diodoro Siculo," in *L'uso dei documenti nella storiografia antica*, eds. A.M. Biraschi, P. Desideri, S. Roda, and G. Zecchini (Naples, 2003), 423–432, 423 ff.

[78] [Sisti], Zambrini, in Arrian, *Anabasi di Alessandro* 2:653.

indeed be present in the *ephemerides*; themselves reliable bases which were then elaborated by later tradition with additional and, perhaps, even falsified material.

In turn, this documental core appears to have had specific autobiographical relevance, since Alexander himself, after drafting his plans under the guise of notes (*hypomnema*), seems to have been intent on entrusting a secretary with these documents, which were to be preserved in the royal archive. In this respect, the *ephemerides* (cf. Arr., *Anab*. 7.25.4–5) recall that the king persistently kept giving orders (*parangellein*) for the departure of the campaign to Arabia despite the worsening of his health conditions: by letting his orders be accurately reported, Alexander evidently intended to leave written evidence of his interest in the expedition.

Thus, despite the fact that with regard to Alexander's production the terms *ephemerides* and *hypomnemata*—the former cited in Arrian, Plutarch, and Athenaeus, the latter in Diodorus—are not synonyms, a relation between these two forms chosen to report his activity and plans cannot be ruled out; this relation itself can in effect also lead to admit the hypothesis of Alexander's direct supervision over the documentary preservation of his "last plans."

Other Ephemerides/Hypomnemata

Although efficient chancelleries were undoubtedly active in all Hellenistic reigns, the existence of *ephemerides* cannot be proven for certain;[79] yet, in the case of the Ptolemies and the Antigonids explicit documentary evidence has survived.

The Ptolemies

The so-called Letter of Aristeas[80] (§ 298) mentions a daily journal that was usually (*ethos*) drafted under the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus; in detail, it was a written document (*anagraphé*) that reported all that the king said and did (*panta … ta legomena kai prassomena*) from the beginning of his daily activity to the moment he retired to his chambers. The author of the letter pretends that this written account is actually the source of the conversation between the king and the translators of the Septuagint during the king's banquet in their honor

[79] Prandi, "Il monarca greco," 56.
[80] A. Pelletier, *Lettre d'Aristée à Philocrate* (Paris, 1962).

(§§ 187–292), a document that he sustains he has obtained from the "drafters" (*anagraphomenoi*, *anagraphentes*) in full detail (§§ 297, 300). Most interestingly, it must be minded that each morning the previous day's account of acts and conversations of the king would be read so as to intervene on the text with amendments[81] if necessary, a habit that proves the king's preoccupation of verifying closely what was to be preserved in the royal archives, and in turn what was to preserve his own "image" for future generations.

Different sources seem to confirm the existence of journals of the Ptolemies. Diodorus (Diod. 3.38.1), for instance, states that he collected information on the Arabic gulf from the royal archive (*basilika hypomnemata*) in Alexandria, which thus confirms the existence of a royal archive in the Library at Alexandria, although whether Diodorus actually consulted the archive is controversial; also drawing on the royal archive (*basilikai anagraphai*), Appian (*Proem*. 10) reports for instance that Ptolemy Philadelphus was summoning an impressive army. Both sources refer to the reign of Ptolemy II (cf. Diod. 3.40.1), and by this then confirm information found in the Letter of Aristeas—even if the exploration of the Arabic gulf planned by Alexander likely took place under the reigns of the first two Ptolemies. From these elements Nicholas Hammond concludes that in Alexandria *hypomnemata/anagraphai* (that is, a royal archive) were actually drafted after Alexander's death.[82]

A rather long excerpt from a royal journal was found in the Gurob Papyrus (*PPetrie* 2.54; 3.144; *FGrHist* 160), dating back to the third century and containing a plural first-person account of the beginnings of the Third Syrian (or Laodicean) War, which broke out at the death of King Antiochus II in 246. As known, Antiochus II had two wives: after Laodice he married Berenice, daughter of Philadelphus in 253/2. The king died from unclear causes (natural death or poisoning) at Laodice's in Ephesus;[83] at his death he left as his heir his eldest son, Seleucus II, born from Laodice. This led to conflicts in the reign of Syria, as Asia Minor sided with the designated heir, Seleucus, whereas Syria supported Berenice and her son; the queen turned to her brother Ptolemy III Euergetes for help. The war, in which Ptolemy III arrived as far as Mesopotamia, concluded

[81] Bosworth, *From Arrian to Alexander*, 173.

[82] Hammond, "A Note," 382–384.

[83] On Laodice, see. L. Martinez-Sève, "Laodice, femme d'Antiochos II: du roman à la reconstruction historique," *REG* 116 (2003), 690–706.

in 241 when the king's army withdrew, acknowledged the legitimacy of Seleucus II, and signed a peace treaty by which the kingdom reached its greatest extent.[84]

In the fragment of the Gurob Papyrus, these episodes, dated winter 246, are narrated by the commander in chief of the Egyptian army. Since the narrator states to be Queen Berenice's brother, he could be identified as either Ptolemy III or as his younger brother, Lysimachus. In this respect, although the events of the Third Syrian War are reported in numerous sources,[85] it is not easy to verify the actual identity of the narrator, which strictly depends on whether at the time of the composition of the account Berenice was still alive or had already been murdered with her son on (her rival) Laodice's suggestion—a fact that cannot be ascertained as the text is particularly evasive on the issue.

With regard to this aspect, Justinus reports that on being reached by news of her planned murder, Berenice barricaded herself with her son in Dafne, and adds: *Ptolomeus pericolo sororis exterritus relicto regno cum omnibus viribus advolat. Sed Beronice ante adventum auxiliorum … dolo circumventa trucidatur* (27.1.6–7). In detail, if Berenice was still alive at the time of the composition of the account, then the passage likely refers to episodes prior to the intervention of Ptolemy III (who arrived in Asia after Berenice's death), and its narrator can be identified as Lysimachus, leader of the first phase of the Egyptian campaign; conversely, if at the time of the composition of the narration Berenice had already been murdered (a fact that the papyrus omits mentioning for opportunity reasons, since the queen's death would have thwarted the objectives of the campaign), then its narrator should be identified as Ptolemy.

In turn, if the latter hypothesis is correct, as indicated by Édouard Will and widely acknowledged,[86] the fragment of the Gurob Papyrus reveals itself to be an official bulletin dictated by the king[87] and addressed to the court in Alexandria, thus both autobiographical and propagandistic

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[84] G. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire* (London, 2001= Darmstadt, 1994), 48 ff.; W. Huss, *Ägypten in hellenistischer Zeit, 332–330 v. Chr.* (Munich, 2001), 338 ff.

[85] See A. Mastrocinque, *Manipolazione della storia in età ellenistica: i Seleucidi e Roma* (Rome, 1983), 39 ff.

[86] E. Will, *Histoire politique du monde hellénistique*, 2 vols. (Nancy, 1979–1982), 1:248 ff.; M. Holleaux, *Études d'épigraphie et d'histoire grecque*, 3 (Paris, 1942), 298 ff.; F. Piejko, "Episodes from the Third Syrian War in a Gurob Papyrus, 246 B.C.," *APF* 36 (1990), 13–27, 16.

[87] As noted, it is difficult to ascertain to which extent the royal secretary, the formal editor of the document, interfered with the king's original text: Prandi, "Il monarca greco," 57–58.

in nature. In the opinion of Felix Jacoby this text could be paralleled with Alexander's letters, rather than with historiographical works like Ptolemy I's *History of Alexander* (which is based on the *ephemerides*, but also on personal memories and on literary sources); differently, Santo Mazzarino has highlighted a certain affinity between this text and the "Annals" of Thutmosis III (diaristic in nature) and with Ramses II's war bulletin on the battle of Qadesh.[88]

In effect, because of the plural first-person narrator, this papyrus account could be construed as an epistolary document rather than as an excerpt from the *ephemerides* (since, as noted, Alexander's *ephemerides* employ a third-person narrator)[89]—although, as known, official letters, the genre to which this "war bulletin" should belong, could be collected in *ephemerides* too. Furthermore, according to Santo Mazzarino, the plural first-person narration proves that the text was intended to remain at a pre-historiographic level, closer to the genre of *hypomnema*; in this guise, it fostered the composition of subsequent, more articulated works, thus providing authors with undoubtedly precious material;[90] in this respect, it must be noted that the bulletin has been considered among Polybius' sources.[91]

As for its autobiographical value, this document realizes "une balance difficile entre histoire, mémoire et autobiographie."[92] In particular, Hans Hauben[93] has highlighted that the text is illuminating on the interests, tastes, ideas, and psychology of the king: in this respect, the document does in effect display acute precision of (numeric, chronological, geographical, onomastic) detail, special interest in the different ranks of the army and the administration, and diplomatic sensibility (Berenice's "silenced" death). In particular, the emotionally loaded descriptions of the king's triumphant entrance into Seleucia and Antioch bring home to us the image of Ptolemy as particularly sensitive to mass manifestations and to religious and cultural events: in this respect, some of these

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[88] Mazzarino, *Il pensiero storico classico*, 2:1, 36.

[89] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 589 ff.

[90] G. Zecchini, "La storiografia lagide," in *Purposes of History. Studies in Greek Historiography from the 4th to the 2nd Centuries B.C.*, eds. H. Verdin, G. Schepens, and E. de Keyser (Leuven, 1990), 213–232, 216.

[91] T. Vecchi, "Il « comunicato » di Tolemeo Euergete sulla guerra laodicea. Note critico-storiche," *Vichiana* 5 (1976), 121–127, 125–126.

[92] G. Schepens, "Les rois ptolémaïques et l'historiographie," in *Egypt and the Hellenistic World*, (Studia Hellenistica) 27 (Lovanii, 1983), 361–368, 367.

[93] H. Hauben, "L'expédition de Ptolémée III en Orient et la sédition domestique de 245 av. J.-C.," *APF* 36 (1990), 29–37, 30–31.

elements might have been deliberately emphasized by the king for the purposes of outlining his personality in positive terms and, in the case of the warm welcome granted to him by Syrian cities, for aggrandizing his public image.

Antipater and the Antigonids

As observed above, the practice of keeping diaries and preserving archives seems to be quite ancient in Macedonia, and it is largely attested in the Hellenistic age. At § 10 the *Encomium of Demosthenes* preserved in Lucian's *corpus* (although it was very likely composed by a fourth-century AD imitator) mentions *Makedonika hypomnemata tes basilikes oikias*, which collected the records of Antipater's acts *epi tes oikias kai peri Demosthenous* (thus, for 322–319). Nicholas Hammond has highlighted that this account gives the impression that gaining access to (and even buying) copies of the *hypomnemata* of the Macedonian royal house was rather "normal": this means that even in the imperial age the *hypomnemata* were copied to be sold and read.[94] Antipater is believed to have drafted *hypomnemata* also during Alexander's campaign to Asia, initially as Alexander's lieutenant and then, after Alexander's death, as regent ruler; most notably, the royal archives mentioned by Lucian are believed to have been drafted until the end of the reign of the Argeads (309).

According to Polyaenus (4.6.2) a (not better identifiable)[95] member of the Antigonids would usually review the *hypomnemata* when expecting ambassadors in order to collect information on the composition and contents of past diplomatic missions, and sound perfectly informed in the eyes of the ambassadors who would be astonished at his excellent memory. In this case the term *hypomnemata* refers to archival documents used as notes on official acts.[96]

In other cases, sources do sometimes refer to single rulers, such as Antigonus Doson, Philip V, and Perseus. In particular, Polybius (4.87.7–8) recounts that Antigonus Doson left a will (*diatheke*) in which "he gave account of his administration to Macedonians" (*hyper ton dioikemenon*) and designated loyal collaborators as top-rank administrators of the reign

[94] Hammond, "A Note," 383.

[95] M.T. Schettino, *Introduzione a Polieno* (Pisa, 1998), 229 n. 39, attributes this anecdote to Gonatas, but believes that Polyaenus was actually thinking of the Monophthalmus.

[96] E. Bianco, *Gli stratagemmi di Polieno* (Alexandria, 1997), 130, merely translates it as "appunti" (notes), referring to the most immediate meaning of *hypomnemata*; that the reference is instead to royal archive's documents seems to me indisputable.

in order to avoid conflicts: among others, Megaleas was appointed *epi tou grammateiou*, which Hammond considers to be the official title of *grammateus*, the secretary in charge of the preservation of the royal archives.[97] As observed, apart from the presence of an *ad acta* secretary, Antigonus' account of his *dioikesis* to Macedonians in his will embodies a remarkable self-justifying move. In this respect, as known, Antigonus had acceded to the throne as Philip V's tutor, which can explain the intention to legitimize his activity as a king. It must also be noted that thereby Antigonus also re-proposed the practice of the public reading of the king's will[98] and the submission of accounts by polis magistrates, like the one adopted by Licurgus with respect to his *dioikesis* and by Demetrius of Phaleron.

As anticipated, Polybius also attests the existence of royal archives in the reigns of the above-mentioned kings, Philip V and Perseus.[99] On the former, at 18.33.2, Polybius reports that after the battle of Cynoscephalae, Philip V fled to Macedonia through the vale of Tempe; the night before his flight, the king had, however, ordered one of the hypaspists to destroy the *basilika grammata* by setting them on fire, being aware of the fact that, had these *grammata* (letters and other documents) fallen into the hands of the Romans, they would have turned into dangerous weapons against him and his allies. In this respect, however, according to Nicholas Hammond the expression *basilika grammata*, which undoubtedly comprises also "the letters of the king,"[100] is here a synonym of *basilikai ephemerides* and *basilika hypomnemata*, thus indicating that King Philip wished *the royal archive* not to be "captured" by his enemies.[101] On the existence of a royal archive under the reign of Perseus, Polyb. 30.13.10 reports that no element against Achaean politicians had been found in the *grammata* of Perseus, which after the battle of Pidna had fallen into the hands of the Romans. Remarkably, in the corresponding passages Livius writes of *commentaria regia* (33.11.1; 45.31.10), an expression that seems to translate the Greek *basilika hypomnemata*.

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[97] Cf. F.W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius*, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1957–1979), 1:536–537.

[98] Hatzopoulos, *Macedonian Institutions*, 1:295.

[99] Prandi, "Il monarca greco," 55.

[100] A. Vimercati, in Polibio, *Storie* (Milan, 1987), 960, translates it as "la corrispondenza regia" (royal correspondence).

[101] Hammond, "Royal Journal," 130–131; see Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius*, 2:594.

3. Ptolemy I

In Alexander's circle political memoir-writing and historiography seem to blend, in particular in Ptolemy I's history of Alexander (*FGrHist* 138), which displays relevant autobiographical traits, even if it is rigorously neither an autobiography nor a work belonging to the genre of *hypomnemata*. Despite the fact that literary sources (such as Clitarchus, Callisthenes and Onesicritus) were undoubtedly available to Ptolemy while drafting this work—considered to be widely based on royal *ephemerides*—it is reasonable to believe that he must have mainly relied on his own personal experience; in this way, his history reflects both his "image" of Alexander as well as the "image" that Ptolemy wished to convey of himself.

Only 35 fragments of Ptolemy's history have survived, which makes the reconstruction of the main features of the work rather difficult; nonetheless, Arrian appears to consider Ptolemy, together with Aristobulus (both eyewitnesses in the abovementioned expedition), his best source:

> Wherever Ptolemy son of Lagus and Aristobulus son of Aristobulus have both given the same accounts of Alexander son of Philip, it is my practice to record what they say as completely true, but where they differ, to select the version I regard as more trustworthy and also better worth telling. In fact other writers have given a variety of accounts of Alexander, nor is there any other figure of whom there are more historians who are more contradictory of each other, but in my view Ptolemy and Aristobulus are more trustworthy in their narrative, since Aristobulus took part in king Alexander's expedition, and Ptolemy not only did the same, but as he himself was a king, mendacity would have been more dishonourable for him than for anyone else; again, both wrote when Alexander was dead and neither was under any constraint or hope of gain to make him set down anything but what actually happened.[102] (Arr., *Anab.* 1.1–2)

Arrian's trust in his firsthand source, Ptolemy, has led modern scholars to believe that the characteristics of the latter's work might be reconstructed on the basis of Arrian's text; in fact, this is harder than it might apparently seem, since in Arrian's history it is often difficult to distinguish precisely the source of information (Ptolemy, Aristoboulus or even the *legomena*).[103]

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[102] Bosworth, *Arrian's History of Alexander*, 1:16 ff.; Sisti, [Zambrini] in Arrian, *Anabasi di Alessandro*, 1:301 ff.

[103] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 500; L. Pearson, *The Lost Histories of Alexander the Great* (New York, 1960), 188 ff.; Bosworth, *From Arrian to Alexander*, 13–14, 39–40.

Ptolemy probably drafted his history of Alexander after 305, when he had already acceded to the throne, spurred more by literary ambition and interest in history than by general political aims.[104] Differently, some scholars set the composition of this work shortly after 321–320, sustaining that Ptolemy, aiming at reinforcing his position, must have wished to provide his own version of "the story" (even turning his work into anti-Perdiccas and anti-Antigonus propaganda by distorting and omitting facts), and to highlight his closeness and collaboration with Alexander.[105] Yet, the "after 305" indication seems to be widely acknowledged[106] and supported by the fact that Arrian's statement that telling lies by Ptolemy, who was the king, would have been utmostly despicable, could actually derive from the proem of Ptolemy's work:[107] in this case, thus, Ptolemy is believed to have presented his work as "the truth" on Alexander, and himself as the latter's loyal heir.[108] Furthermore, although political self-legitimization aims cannot be completely excluded on the part of Ptolemy, his work's main intent seems to have been to provide a sober and faithful account of Alexander's campaign in order to counterbalance the emergence of "less supervised" and "more fantastic" accounts like Clitarchus', published about the end of the fourth century (F26).[109]

On the reconstruction of Ptolemy's work on the basis of fragments, see H. Strasburger, *Ptolemaios und Alexander* (Leipzig, 1934), 102 ff.; on the basis of Arrian's text, see Pédech, *Historiens compagnons d'Alexandre*, 222 ff.

[104] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 500 (that admits that political aims might be discernible in some specific cases: see F3 on the destruction of Thebes, and F8 on the visit to the Oracle of Ammon); J. Roisman, "Ptolemy and his Rivals in his History of Alexander," *CQ* 34 (1984), 373–385, 385 in particular ("Ptolemy could have written history simply for the sake of writing history").

[105] E. Badian, in *Gnomon* 33 (1961), 660–667; R.M. Errington, "Bias in Ptolemy's History of Alexander," *CQ* 19 (1969), 233–242; Bosworth, *Arrian's History of Alexander*, 1:23, 26–27; precise refutation of these hypotheses is provided in Roisman, "Ptolemy," 373–385.

[106] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 499; Pédech, *Historiens compagnons d'Alexandre*, 234 ff.; Roisman, "Ptolemy," 373–385; W.M. Ellis, *Ptolemy of Egypt* (London, 1994), 17 ff.; see K. Meister, *Die grieschische Geschichtsschreibung* (Stuttgart, 1990), 113 ff.; P. Goukowsky, *Essai sur les origines du mythe d'Alexandre*, 2 vols. (Nancy, 1978–1981), 1:142–143, according to which a post-Ipsos date is reasonable.

[107] C. Gorteman, "Basileus philalethes," *CE* 33 (1958), 256–267; Pédech, *Historiens compagnons d'Alexandre*, 235–236; contra Bosworth, *Arrian's History of Alexander*, 1:43. On the relation of king/truth, see Prandi, "Il monarca greco," 59 ff.; Pearson, *Lost Histories*, 194 n. 27, on the basis of the *Letter of Aristeas* (§ 206), hypothesizes that the conceptual link between king and truth was particularly present in the Ptolemaic notion of regality.

[108] Zecchini, "Storiografia lagide," 213.

[109] See L. Prandi, *Fortuna e realtà dell'opera di Clitarco*, Historia Einzelschriften 104 (Stuttgart, 1996), 69 ff., 79 ff.

In drafting his account (whose title is unknown),[110] Ptolemy likely drew widely on royal journals in order to support his own personal memories.[111] This approach seems to emerge clearly from comparison with parallel excerpts from Arrian's work on events that saw Ptolemy as a protagonist and that sound particularly rich in details and information (Arr., *Anab.* 3:29.6–30, 6 = F14; 4.24.1–25.4 = F18; 5.20.8–24.5 = F22, 35).[112] These passages in Arrian confirm that Ptolemy scrupulously reported Alexander's (written or oral) orders, detailed the entity of troops for officers, mentioned deployed units and their locations, and often also provided data on losses.[113]

Ptolemy's interests were thus mostly military in nature (his work taking the form of an account of military circumstances and events at the court particularly focused on sayings and facts related to Alexander) and lacked geographical and ethnographic interests, which are instead typical of historiographic accounts of Alexander's campaign.[114]

In general, Ptolemy's work seems to have displayed distinctive features: a strongly pro-Alexander perspective (F3, 7, 13, 16–17, 23)—he is portrayed as a man endowed with a king's essential virtues (religious piety, sense of justice, military talent)[115]—although Ptolemy tends to convey a perhaps too "rationalized" picture of the his personality;[116] the justifying reference to the "official version" of facts in very delicate cases (for instance, the destruction of Thebes, F3; the court trial against Philotas, F13; the death of Callisthenes, F17); and finally, the adoption of a rigorously "Macedonian" interpretation of Alexander's campaign,[117] distancing itself both from Hellenic-oriented interpretations (like Callistenes') and from an "ecumenic" notion of conquest and its consequences.

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[110] *Ta Alexandrou erga* according to E. Kornemann, *Die Alexandergeschichte des Königs Ptolemaios I. von Ägypten* (Leipzig, 1935), 30 ff.

[111] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 500; less convinced about the systemic use of written documentation are Pearson, *Lost Histories*, 194–195, and Bosworth, *Arrian's History of Alexander*, 1:23 ff.

[112] Meister, *Griechische Geschichtsschreibung*, 114; Bosworth, *From Arrian to Alexander*, 40.

[113] Pearson, *Lost Histories*, 204.

[114] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 499; Pearson, *Lost Histories*, 196 ff.; Pédech, *Historiens compagnons d'Alexandre*, 276 ff.

[115] Pédech, *Historiens compagnons d'Alexandre*, 315 ff.

[116] G. Wirth, "Ptolemaios als Schriftsteller und Historiker," *RE* 23 (1959), 2467–2484.

[117] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 500; Pédech, *Historiens compagnons d'Alexandre*, 252 ff.; Meister, *Griechische Geschichtsschreibung*, 115–116.

Most notably, the excerpts from Arrian's work on events with Ptolemy as a protagonist and that appear to be based on the king's own narration have relevant autobiographical value that does not seem to invalidate historical reconstruction.[118] In effect, even if Curtius Rufus (9.5.21) affirms that Ptolemy was "no enemy to his glory" (*scilicet gloriae suae non refragatus*), the king seems to have been rather moderate in recounting the events related to his own person, as well as preferring an "aseptic" tone, typical of "war bulletins," rather than a strictly memoirist approach; this element in particular has actually spurred Lionel Pearson to unflatteringly define Ptolemy's work "a first-class source of information, but not an inspired work of history."[119] In addition to that, the fact that Ptolemy's narration stops at Alexander's death (as proven by the controversial F30)[120] is believed to be further evidence that the king did not intend to write expressly about himself;[121] indeed, Alexander (not Ptolemy) is the protagonist of his narration, as proven both by the fragments from his work and the excerpts in Arrian, who declares Alexander to be one of his privileged sources.

Undoubtedly, Ptolemy did intervene in order to correct inaccurate information about himself (for instance, about being the "savior" of Alexander during the siege of the city of the Malli, as attested by Clitarchus and Timagenes but refuted by Ptolemy himself who recounts that in those circumstances he was elsewhere; see F26),[122] and to emphasize his own contribution, depicting himself, in particular, as a clever general and a loyal collaborator (F14, 18, 35)—*prae virtute regi suo proximus*—to use the words that Justinus "lends" to Ptolemy in the debate on the succession.[123] Yet, as has been emphasized, Ptolemy's tendency to avoid propagandistic overtones in connection to his own role (besides denying being Alexander's savior, Ptolemy also omits the episode in which Alexander "saved" him after he had been injured by a poisoned weapon)[124] "should

[118] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 500; but see Bosworth, *Arrian's History of Alexander*, 1:23 ff., which sees incompatibility between strong autobiographical relevance and reliability. On the *status quaestionis* on Ptolemy's reliability see Meister, *Griechische Geschichtsschreibung*, 115–116.

[119] Pearson, *Lost Histories*, 211.

[120] [Sisti], Zambrini, in Arrian, *Anabasi di Alessandro*, 2:655.

[121] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 500.

[122] Bosworth, *From Arrian to Alexander*, 78 ff.; Hammond, *Sources*, 265 ff.

[123] Cf. Just. 13.2.12; Goukowsky, *Essai*, 1:142; see Schepens, "Les rois ptolémaïques et l'historiographie," 364–365.

[124] Diod. 17.103.6–8; Curt. 9.8, 20–28.

caution against designating his work as an autobiography or memoir aimed at sustaining his position at home or abroad."[125]

Then, from these remarks, Ptolemy's work can hardly be categorized as either autobiography or *hypomnemata*. We could perhaps define it as a form of "self-representation" that, judging from extant fragments,[126] conveys military competence, loyalty toward Alexander, and adherence to the official version of facts on the part of Ptolemy, and as the work of a man who, as acutely pointed out by Walter Ellis, "told the truth from his own point of view."[127]

4. Pyrrhus

Unlike Ptolemy's work, Pyrrhus' memoirs (*FGrHist* 229) undoubtedly pertain to the genre of *hypomnemata* (as they are expressly called), and seem to follow in the wake of the above-sketched Macedonian tradition—to which Pyrrhus was likely closely tied both due to existing relations between Epirus and Macedonia, and to his ambitions about the Macedonian throne.[128]

Two fragments of Pyrrhus' memoirs have survived. The first has been preserved by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*AR* 20.10); this fragment mentions the Epirote historian, Proxenus (*FGrHist* 703 F9), in relation to Pyrrhus' conviction that his defeat at Maleventum must have been due to the sacrilege of having plundered the temple of Persephone at Locri, and claims that this conviction had also been expressed by Pyrrhus *en tois idiois hypomnemasi*. The second fragment has been preserved by Plutarch (*Pyrrh*. 21.12); about the battle of Asculum, the fragment reports (from Hyeronymus of Cardia [*FGrHist* 154 F12]) that while the Romans had suffered six thousand deaths, Pyrrhus' army had only had 3,505 losses—most notably, no round figures but rather the exact numbers reported *en tois basilikois hypomnemasin* (*FGrHist* 154 F2).

The expressions *basilika hypomnemata* and *idia hypomnemata* seem to refer to royal journals (*ephemerides*, *hypomnemata*) like those kept by Alexander and the Macedonian kings. In this respect, Felix Jacoby[129] is skeptical about speaking of Pyrrhus' "memoirs," whose publication has

[125] Roisman, "Ptolemy," 384. See also Pédech, *Historiens compagnons d'Alexandre*, 252.
[126] Roisman, "Ptolemy," 383 and n. 49.
[127] Ellis, *Ptolemy of Egypt*, 22.
[128] Prandi, "Il monarca greco," 56–57.
[129] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 653.

been hypothesized on the basis of Paus. 1.12.2—which in relation to Pyrrhus mentions the existence of *ergon hypomnemata*. On F1, Jacoby claims that Proxenus, the court historian, might have drawn information from the royal journals (*FGrHist* 703 F9), and on F2 he suggests that Hieronymus (*FGrHist* 154 F11) must have relied on Pyrrhus' royal archive which, after the king's death in 272 (Plut., *Pyrrh*. 34.11), had fallen in the hands of Antigonus Gonatas. But these journals could have been mere *ephemerides*, and thus the *hypomnemata* would have had no literary bases of their own; yet, as has been noted, the existence of Pyrrhus' *hypomnemata* is precisely attested in references made by Dionysus and Plutarch, thus it cannot be convincingly refuted.[130]

A note has to be devoted to critical debate between Pyrrhus' work and the abovementioned passage in Pausanias, who in the *logos* on Pyrrhus[131] (at 1.12.2 about the king's campaigns), mentions "books written by men of no renown (*ouk epiphanesin*) as historians, entitled 'Memoirs' [*ergon hypomnemata*]" (*FGrHist* 159).[132] Gustav Droysen[133] hypothesized that *ergon hypomnemata* correspond to Pyrrhus' "memoirs," that is, the *hypomnemata* mentioned by Dionysus and Plutarch, to which the king and his collaborators gave a literary form. In this respect, Jacoby, who, as already observed, is skeptical about the existence of Pyrrhus' memoirs, claims instead that the expression *hypomnemata ergon* does not likely refer to memoir-writing, but rather indicates "bücher über erga" and identifies a "handbuch" on the campaigns of Pyrrhus (not of several historical figures) which drew on Hieronymus and other authors.[134] Unlike Jacoby, Pierre Lévêque[135] reads the *hypomnemata* as a late collection of *memorabilia*—like the work of Valerius Maximus—not specifically devoted to Pyrrhus' campaigns, but rather portraying these among others; finally, albeit not explicitly aligning himself with Lévêque's hypothesis, Domenico Musti[136] points out that the concise nature of Pausanias' account seems to support the notion of a multi-protagonist collection.

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[130] P. Lévêque, *Pyrrhos*, *BEFAR* 185 (Paris, 1957), 20; similarly, V. La Bua, "Prosseno e gli Hypomnemata Pyrrhou," *MGR* 3 (Rome, 1971), 1–61, 14.

[131] C. Bearzot, *Storia e storiografia ellenistica in Pausania il Periegeta* (Venice, 1992), 228 ff.

[132] Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 1–4, eds. and trans. W.H.S. Jones and H.A. Ormerod (Cambridge, Mass., 1918).

[133] G. Droysen, *Geschichte des Hellenismus*, 3 (Basel, 1953^2 = 1843), 85–86 and n. 75.

[134] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 588.

[135] Lévêque, *Pyrrhos*, 20 ff.

[136] [L. Beschi], D. Musti, in Pausania, *Guida della Grecia, Libro I. L'Attica* (Milan, 1982), 301.

In this respect, I believe that the identification of Pyrrhus' work with *hypomnemata basilika* (or with *idia hypomnemata*)—as drafted by the king, or more likely by a court historian (as in the case of Alexander's *ephemerides*) and widely used as a source of historical information on Pyrrhus by both Proxenos and Hyeronymus—cannot be convincingly denied; in fact, the elements provided by Pausanias do not refute, but rather lead to, this identification. Firstly, as can be recalled, the *ergon hypomnemata* were, above all, pro-Pyrrhus sources: this seems to me indisputable, and proven by the fact that Pausanias affirms that while reading the *ergon hypomnemata* he "marveled greatly both at the personal bravery of Pyrrhus in battle, and also at the forethought he displayed whenever a contest was imminent." The antinomy *tolma/pronoia* was functional to convey a global positive evaluation of the contradictions that characterized Pyrrhus' personality—his fearlessness and generosity were emphasized while avoiding expression of hostile remarks on his thoughtlessness and restlessness, which were indeed typical traits highlighted in Antigonid propaganda. Secondly, the *ergon hypomnemata* were drafted by "not very well-known historians," a proper definition for the *ghost writers* (most likely Proxenos and Cineas) entrusted with the literary rendering of Pyrrhus' *hypomnemata*.

On these bases, then, I would not exclude that Paus. 1.12.2 is actually referring to the *hypomnemata Pyrrhou*—if not to their original form as *ephemerides*, at least to a literary version like the one that Vincenzo La Bua attributes to Proxenos.[137] In addition to that, the substantially correct assumption that the *hypomnemata* might have been used only by Proxenos and Hyeronymus, the sole authors that mention these sources (as they had fallen into Antigonus' hands in 272), does not fully rule out the hypothesis that Pyrrhus' *hypomnemata* (or part thereof) could be circulating before 272 and afterwards (being thus the documents Pausanias himself might have read, too).

Ergon hypomnemata are of hardly discernible paternity; they pertain to court historiography, and Proxenos cannot be considered to be their sole author, even if he can have played a role in contributing to their drafting and re-elaboration; in this respect, it must be remembered that Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who seems to cite *hypomnemata* not directly but rather via Proxenos,[138] calls these documents *idia hypomnemata*,

[137] La Bua, "Prosseno," 19 ff.

[138] Similarly, Lévêque, *Pyrrhos*, 22; La Bua, "Prosseno," 24; M.T. Schettino, *Tradizioni*

thus attributing them to Pyrrhus himself. In particular, then, with regard to the author of their literary re-elaboration, I would rather indicate (as sustained elsewhere) Cineas the Thessalian, Pyrrhus' counselor and collaborator (*FGrHist* 603),[139] rather than Proxenos (as suggested by La Bua). In this respect, Cicero (*Ad fam*. 9.25.1), like Aelianus (*Tact*. 1.2), holds Pyrrhus and Cineas to be the authors of *Taktika* (*FGrHist* 603 T3); thus it is not unlikely that Pyrrhus could have entrusted Cineas, with whom he shared similar literary interests, with the drafting of the royal journals.

A few elements seem to sustain the hypothesis that Cineas could be Pyrrhus' *ghostwriter*—as advanced by Mario Segre, embraced by Jacoby, and too radically excluded by La Bua[140]—and specifically explain some aspects of Pyrrhus' propaganda that Pausanias proposes in the *logos* and that he might have found in the *hypomnemata* drafted by Cineas: insistence on Pyrrhus' Thessalian origins (Cineas was a Thessalian), pro-Roman remarks (cf. Plut., *Pyrrh*. 15 ff.), and even a possible link with the Athenian democratic tradition (Cineas was one of Demosthenes' disciples: *FGrHist* 603 T2). In this regard, we know that Cineas had reservations on some traits of Pyrrhus' personality and that, for instance, he did not share Pyrrhus' craving for exploration and conquest: in his dialogue with Pyrrhus reported by Plut., *Pyrrh*. 14, whose historical authenticity has been confirmed by Pierre Lévêque,[141] Cineas criticizes the king for his immoderate *elpides*. Finally, the identification of Cineas as the author of such a literary re-elaboration could also explain the reservations that surface in Pausanias' work, which thus would not derive from hostile tradition.

Independently from the author of their literary re-elaboration, the *hypomnemata* prove Pyrrhus' (autobiographical) interest in providing a precise "picture" of himself in literary form. Judging from *FGrHist* 229 F1, it can be inferred that in his *hypomnemata* Pyrrhus wished to be portrayed as a pious man, respectful of god-sent signs. This intention seems to be particularly clear in the episode of the defeat at *Maleventum*: the defeat, which had been "announced" to Pyrrhus in a dream the

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annalistiche e tradizioni ellenistiche su Pirro in Dionigi (A.R. XIX–XX), (Collection Latomus) 215 (Brussells, 1991), 71.

[139] Bearzot, *Storia e storiografia ellenistica*, 245–246.

[140] M. Segre, *La fonte di Pausania per la storia dei diadochi, Historia*, 2 (1928), 217–237, 224 n. 26; see Jacoby, *FGrHist* 3B, *Kommentar* Text, 681; contra La Bua, "Prosseno," 21 n. 2.

[141] Lévêque, *Pyrrhos*, 189 ff.

night before the battle, is indeed blamed on his friend who, despite the king's preoccupation, opted for an immediate attack: both Proxenus, and Pyrrhus in his *hypomnemata*, highlight the cause-effect link between the defeat (highly unlikely "on paper," thanks to Pyrrhus' ability as a general and his army's numbers and expertise) and the sacrilege of plundering the temple of Persephone at Locri as proposed by *hoi kakistoi kai anosiotatoi ton philon*, overtly defined *kolakes*. Under pressures and necessity, Pyrrhus had consented to the sacrilege and later attributed his army's unexpected defeat (by the Romans) to the goddess' *cholos*, whose worship had been sacrilegiously violated (Dion. Halic. *AR* 20.9 ff.). Despite the fact that emphasis on the negative influence exerted by some courtesans is more likely attributable to a member of the court (the drafter of the *hypomnemata*) rather than to the king himself, in this passage Pyrrhus' interest in showing *pietas* and regret is significantly evident and must reflect the king's intentions.

Furthermore, such a self-portrayal could actually have been also aimed to counterbalance typical elements in Antigonid propaganda. Plutarch (*Pyrrh*. 26.12–13) reports that in about 274 Pyrrhus was "censured by the Macedonians" as he did not punish his Galatian mercenary soldiers who had plundered the tombs of the Macedonian kings at Aigai, thus tolerating their misdeed with "lightness and indifference," either due to fear or because he wished to postpone their punishment (cf. Diod. 22.12). If, by mentioning this episode (or similar circumstances), Antigonid propaganda aimed at depicting Pyrrhus not only as ambitious and aggressive, conquest- and plunder-thirsty,[142] but also as impious and indifferent to religious issues, it is not so hard to imagine that, in his turn, Pyrrhus must have been intent on employing his *hypomnemata* as documents that could portray himself as a man rich in *pietas* and aware of the negative consequences of sacrilegious violations and neglected omens.

5. Autobiography of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II

The nature of the ample collection (twenty-four books) of the *hypomnemata* of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II (*FGrHist* 234) is proven by eleven extant fragments, all pertaining to Books 2–9—thus to the first third of the collection—preserved via Athenaeus, who was particularly interested in the literary production of the Egyptian area as well as in the contents of

[142] This was Hieronymus' view; see Lévêque, *Pyrrhos*, 22 ff.

documentary sources like the *hypomnemata*. The fragments are written in the plural or first person singular (F1, 6, 9, 10), and according to Felix Jacoby they are "wirkliche memoiren"[143] collected in old age (if the first nine books covered the span between about 180 and 146, the following fifteen must have dealt with the last years of the king, almost until his death in 116).

Judging from the fragments selected by Athenaeus on the basis of the learned interests of the *Deipnosophists*—thus not fully indicative of the overall contents of Ptolemy's work—the *hypomnemata* contained memories of the adventurous life of the king, from boyhood in Alexandria (F2 from Book 2 is about the pheasants raised, perhaps by Ptolemy's predecessor, Ptolemy Philadelphus, at the palace of Alexandria; F4 from Book 3 is about Philadelphus' mistresses) to his golden exile in Cyrene (F9 from Book 8 describes the annual banquet of Apollo's priest at Cyrene), as well as travel memories (to Rome, F5 from Book 5; to Assos in Troas, F10 from Book 9), curiosities (fish in the River Leto at Berenice in Libya, F1, from Book 8;[144] the frozen water source at Corinth, from which the king himself had drunk, F6, from Book 7), and hints at the king's own literary activity (F11 mentions Ptolemy's intervention in the field of Homeric exegesis, which is not so strange for someone who had been one of Aristarch of Samothrace's disciples [cf. *FGrHist* 234 T1]). Besides autobiographical and learned traits, some fragments also prove the political nature of the *hypomnemata*; among these, F3 (from Book 3) and F5 (from Book 5) are devoted to the eccentric behavior of Antiochus IV Epiphanes;[145] F7 and F8 (from Book 8) are devoted to the customs of Massinissa king of Numidia; the abovementioned F9 (again from Book 8) is on the period of Ptolemy VIII's sovereignty over Cyrenaica (163–146) after part of the reign had been assigned to his brother Ptolemy VI. From these elements, it can be concluded that the events recounted in the *hypomnemata* were apparently chronologically arranged, historical and autobiographical in nature, and rich in anecdotes, which has led Momigliano to highlight their "private, almost intimate, character."[146]

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[143] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 658.

[144] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 658–659.

[145] Perhaps during the invasion of Egypt by Syria in 168, according to Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 658; during the king's sojourn (as prisoner) in Rome between 189 and 175, and then at the games of Daphne in 166 according to G. Zecchini, *La cultura storica di Ateneo* (Milan, 1989), 102.

[146] Momigliano, *Biography*, 90.

No elements at our disposal clarify possible relations between the *hypomnemata* and the royal journals. In any case, the first-person narration is discontinuous with, for instance, Alexander's *ephemerides* (and also, as has been noted, with memoirs like Xenophon's *Anabasis* and Ptolemy I's history of Alexander),[147] while showing proximity to the abovementioned Gurob papyrus and Ptolemy III's "war bulletin" insofar as in both texts the king "acts" as a historiographer/memorialist and narrates events in the first-person mode.[148] In particular, the use of the first-person narrator has led to thinking that Ptolemy VIII likely tended to consider his *hypomnemata* as a minor historiographic genre and as open to further historiographic re-elaboration by professional historians.[149]

Athenaeus calls (14.654d) Ptolemy VIII's *hypomnemata* "*polythryletoi istoriai*," suggesting that they were very well known; at his time these documents were undoubtedly still available, since he seems to have direct access to them and quotes them by heart, thus sometimes imprecisely.[150] Yet, the fact that quotations from these *hypomnemata* are present in Athenaeus only, whose parochialism toward Egyptian culture is renowned, leads to think that they might be merely locally known.[151]

In particular, Athenaeus likely turned to Ptolemy VIII's *hypomnemata* not only for local patriotism but also because of the lack of a valid alternative. As has been observed, Ptolemy's work sees the light in a particularly dramatic context for Lagid culture and historiography, that is, after Ptolemy VIII, who in 145 had become the sole king of the reign and had banned the intellectuals who had supported Ptolemy VI from Alexandria.[152] Due to their banishment, Egyptian historiography suffered "a halt"; simultaneously, and most remarkably, Ptolemy VIII's *hypomnemata* became thus the sole source on Ptolemaic history after Agatarchides.[153] For these reasons, despite considering Ptolemy VIII a *kakerghetes* due to his actions against the intellectuals (4.184b–c,

[147] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 658.
[148] Schepens, "Les rois ptolémaïques et l'historiographie," 367–368 n. 59; Prandi, "Il monarca greco," 57–58.
[149] Zecchini, "Storiografia lagide," 226.
[150] Zecchini, *Ateneo*, 103.
[151] Zecchini, "Storiografia lagide," 227.
[152] Will, *Histoire politique du monde hellénistique*, 2:357 ff.
[153] Zecchini, *Ateneo*, 101 ff.; Zecchini, "Storiografia lagide," 223 ff.

12.549d), Athenaeus *had to* turn to the king's *hypomnemata* to fill the cultural gap produced by the king's decision. In this respect, Athenaeus seems to have drawn on these documents, as on Agatharchides' work, to cover the historiographical gap between his "beloved" Phylarchus and the far less esteemed Polybius,[154] and precisely the years 220–168 (as proven by the fact that Athenaeus only refers to the first third of Ptolemy's work, that is, Books 2–9, which cover the years from about 180 to 146). This seems to support the notion that the king's *hypomnemata* must have had not only an unquestionable autobiography, but also an overall political value, which, however, Athenaeus' selection does not wholly illuminate.

6. Autobiographical Inscriptions (Ptolemy I, Ptolemy III, Antiochus I of Commagene)

In the Hellenistic age, the Eastern tradition, according to which kings addressed their subjects by first-person monumental inscriptions, resurfaces in Egyptian and Anatolic areas with inscriptions by the Ptolemies and by Antiochus I of Commagene.

Ptolemy I

A document of great interest from the age of Ptolemy I is the so-called "Satrap Stele,"[155] dated to Thoth 1 (November–December) of the seventh year of Alexander IV's reign, thus November 9, 311. The stele, which was reemployed as building material for a mosque in Cairo, perhaps came from a temple in Sais. It carries an inscription in hieroglyphic writing and in its upper section displays a picture of the king as pharaoh offering food and drink to a divinity.

The stele was erected to celebrate the circumstances in which a temple of the Nile delta—the temple of Horus in Buto—recovered its privileges, which had been originally granted by the native king Khababash (338–336), rebellious against the Achaemenids,[156] and later denied by the Persian king Arses (Artaxerses IV) after crushing the rebellion. Khababash is thus remembered as the "national" predecessor of Ptolemy, from an anti-

[154] Zecchini, *Ateneo*, 91 and 103.

[155] Hölbl, *Ptolemaic Empire*, 83; W. Huss, *Der makedonische König und die ägyptischen Priester*, Historia Einzelschriften 85 (Stuttgart, 1994), 93 ff.; ibid., *Ägypten*, 135–136.

[156] S.M. Burstein, "Prelude to Alexander: The Reign of Khababash," *AHB* 14 (2000), 149–154.

Persian viewpoint.[157] Privileges were re-accorded as a gesture of thanks to Horus (and the local priests) for helping Ptolemy in the Syrian expedition, perhaps by a favorable oracle.[158]

The text on the stele describes Ptolemy as a brave warrior and a victorious general, in accordance with the hagiographic viewpoint of pharaonic tradition: "a person of youthful energy was he, strong in both arms, prudent of mind, powerful amidst men, of firm courage, steady foot, repelling the raging, not turning his back, striking the face of his foes amidst their combat." Most notably, these features are attributed to Ptolemy despite the fact that he is not yet properly "the king," but still merely "the satrap" of Egypt.

Remarkably, the fact that denied privileges to the temple of Horus in Buto were in effect re-accorded as Ptolemy landed north of the area of the temple in 312/11—on his return from the campaign of Syria, in which he had defeated Demetrius Poliorcetes in Gaza—afforded the stele the opportunity to celebrate Ptolemy's exploits by mentioning his victorious march across Syria, the rich booty he brought back to Egypt—including the statues of divinities that had been stolen in Egyptian temples and then found in Asia[159]—and also a hardly identifiable second campaign.

Most significant for the scope of the present contribution, the stele contains a part that can be considered autobiographical. It is a decree reported in the text drafted by the priests of the temple of Horus. In the decree, after having inquired about the status of the temple and its privileges (first granted by Khababash, then denied by Arses), Ptolemy speaks in the first person, and proclaims his intention of restoring Khababash-granted territories (precisely described in terms of extension and richness) to the divinity.

Besides showing his devotion and gratitude toward the local divinities, in this "declaration of intents" Ptolemy also highlights his continuity with the legitimate kings, themselves in turn heirs to the ancient pharaonic tradition. Thus, the inscription proves to embody an evident self-legitimizing move that proposes "Ptolemy the satrap" as the new potential pharaoh of Egypt, respectful of local traditions and the class of priests, and utterly hostile to the hated Achaemenid kings. As known,

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[157] H. Goedicke, "Comments on the Satrap Stela," *BES* 6 (1984), 33–54.

[158] J.K. Winnicki, "Ptolemaios I. und Seleukos in Syrien," *AncSoc* 22 (1991), 164 ff.

[159] Ptolemy's benevolent act evokes the famous "restitutions" of statues stolen from Greek temples and then found in Asia by Alexander. Cf. Huss, *Der makedonische König*, 46; Id., *Ägypten*, 136 n. 311.

Ptolemy assumed the royal title in 305: the fact that as early as 311 he was already intent on inserting himself into the local tradition as the heir to the legacy of native rulers, and as opposed to the Persians, is extremely meaningful. Ptolemy's move is also particularly significant as it constituted a U-turn, a sudden change in policy: Alexander had kept the Persian administration and staff in office, thus contributing to making the figure of Khababash[160] sink into oblivion; later, discontent arising under the rule of the satrap Cleomenes of Naucratis[161] had revived hopes of the restoration of native rulers in Egypt under the leadership of a descendant of Pharaoh Nectanebo II. Ptolemy, being hostile to Cleomenes, evidently preferred presenting himself in continuity with the native rulers, distancing himself from both the Achaemenids and the satrap that had preceded him.

Ptolemy III

Literary sources have preserved the text of the stele of Adulis (OGIS 54), as transcribed by Cosmas Indicopleustes in the sixth century AD, and collected in his *Topographia Christiana* (2.58–59).[162] Cosmas accurately describes a monument that he personally saw at Adulis (Zula, about 30 miles south of Massawa, in Eritrea): a marble chair, a throne, resting on four pillars at the entrance of the town on the western side by the road which leads to Axum, behind which was a by-then fallen basanite stele surmounted by a pediment; both the throne and the stele were covered over with Greek characters (2.54–55). Cosmas informs his readers that the Governor of Adulis applied to him and a merchant called Menas to take copies of the inscriptions on the throne and on the stele for the King of the Axumites, Elesbaan, who was preparing to start an expedition against the Homerites. The copies were taken at the beginning of the reign of the Roman Emperor Justinus (518–527); Cosmas kept a copy of the inscriptions for himself and reported them in his *Topographia* since their contents contributed to the knowledge of the country, its inhabitants, and the distances of the several places (2.56).

At 2.58–59 Cosmas transcribes the epigraphic text. It begins with the royal titles which delineate Ptolemy III's human and divine origin:

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[160] S.M. Burstein, "Alexander in Egypt: Continuity or Change," in *Achaemenid History*, 8, eds. H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg et. al (Leiden, 1994), 381–387.

[161] G. Le Rider, "Cléomène de Naucratis," *BCH* 121 (1997), 71–93.

[162] I use the edition of W. Wolska-Conus, ed., *La Topographie Chrétienne de Cosmas Indicopleustès*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1968–1973), 121 ff. for bibliographical references.

> The Great King, Ptolemaios, son of King Ptolemaios and of Queen Arsinoe, the gods Adelphoi, the children of King Ptolemaios and of Queen Berenike, the gods Soteres, descended through his father from Herakles, and through his mother from Dionysos, the son of Zeus.[163]

The royal titles are followed by a general survey of the Ptolemaic reign that the king had inherited from his father, Ptolemy II. It comprises "the Kingdom of Egypt and Libya and Syria and Phoenicia and Cyprus, and Lycia and Caria, and the Islands of the Cyclades." Most remarkably, no difference is made between those areas that were directly subject to the authority of the king—Egypt and Libya—and those which were only partially controlled or even formally independent and over which a protectorate was exercised (Syria, Phoenicia, Cyprus; Asia Minor and the Cyclades); this for the fact that the text is aimed at an Egyptian "public," thus it adopts communicative modes typical of the Eastern, not the Greek, tradition, and accordingly has no interest in distinguishing among varying degrees and forms of territorial control.

The inscription recounts then Ptolemy's expedition into Asia, with forces of infantry and cavalry, and a fleet and elephants captured by himself and by his father and then employed in war. The epigraphic account devotes much space to the results of such a massive mobilization on the part of Ptolemy:

> And having become master of all the countries on this side of the Euphrates and of Kilikia and of Pamphylia and of Ionia and of the Hellespont and of Torace and of all forces in these countries and of Indian elephants; and having made the rulers in these places all subjects, he crossed the Euphrates River; and, after having made Mesopotamia and Babilonia and Sousiana and Persis and Media and the rest as far as Baktriana his subjects; and after having sought out all the sacred objects which have been taken from Egypt by the Persians and returned (them) together with the other treasures from these places to Egypt, he sent his forces through the canals …

At the end of the transcription, which has to be interrupted because of the fracture of the stone, Cosmas highlights that the lost fragment, whose text cannot be reconstructed, consists of a few words only, thus that its loss is scarcely significant. At 2.60–63 Cosmas transcribes then the inscription on the throne, which is however to be attributed to an Axumite king.[164]

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[163] Translation by S.M. Burstein, in *The Hellenistic Age from the Battle of Ipsos to the Death of Kleopatra VII* (Cambridge, 1985).

[164] Wolska-Conus, in *La Topographie Chrétienne de Cosmas Indicopleustès* 1:372–373, n. 60.

As noted, the inscription, which commemorates the results of the first phase of the Laodicean War (AD 246–245),[165] adopts the model of Eastern inscriptions from those of Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian origins, to those of Pompey and Shapur. In effect, the inscription is expressed in the third-person narrator; enumerates royal titles and genealogy; proclaims Ptolemy's sovereignty over a series of territories; and proposes a chronicle of the expedition that inventories the mobilized troops, the stages of conquest, and the booties, and narrates the king's homecoming. In the fragment that went missing there may likely have been, as in analogous cases, some words of thanksgiving to the divinities for having guarded the king's safe and happy return.[166] However, besides the structure of Eastern inscriptions, in this text Marie-Françoise Baslez also identifies the model of travel accounts and Greek geographical descriptions: it is in effect narrated according to a spatial, not a chronological, sequence, and it is presented as a journey culminating in the crossing of the Euphrates river whose sole details (the elephants, the canals) pertain to the category of *mirabilia*.[167]

Most remarkably, the collation between the inscription and the Gurob Papyrus, which recounts the same events, highlights particularly significant differences; among them are a shift from the first- to the third-person narrator, from the account of daily circumstances to the geopolitical representation of conquest, from the expression of personal feelings to the absence of any form of individual participation: all elements that characterize monumental epigraphy—and differentiate it from journal-writing—in which the individual tends to disappear.[168]

These reasonable observations do not, however, exclude the presence of "autobiographical" traits in this inscription similar to those emerging from the Gurob Papyrus. In effect, by means of this inscription Ptolemy III must have intended to offer a self-portrayal which may have resulted in continuity, but also in contrast with his father Ptolemy II's, while also presenting his own political program. The inscription is then not less propagandistic and self-celebrating than the Gurob Papyrus, notwithstanding the different structure of the two texts due to their different forms (monumental inscription/journal) and "public" (Egyptian

[165] Hauben, "L'expédition de Ptolémée III," 32.
[166] Baslez, "Écriture monumentale," 72–73 and 73 n. 1.
[167] Baslez, "Écriture monumentale," 73.
[168] Baslez, "Écriture monumentale," 73–74.

subjects/the court). As noted by Gustav Adolf Lehmann,[169] this inscription does not provide any political-juridical justification for the expedition into Syria that may be connected with Berenice's dynastic struggle; differently, it insists on comparing the extension of the reign that Ptolemy III had inherited from Philadelphus to his own new conquests, which enabled him first to subjugate all "monarchs" who ruled on this side of the Euphrates, and then, by crossing the river, to reach the limits of the *ecumene*.[170] The rather detailed list of subjugated territories only omits the areas of Asia Minor (Lydia, Phrygia, Pisidia, Lycaonia, Galatia) controlled by Laodice's supporters, while mentioning Ionia and Pamphylia, won from Ptolemy II by Antiochus II at the end of the Second Syrian War (260–253) and that Ptolemy III claims to have re-conquered.

Thus, the text of the inscription appears to be not only commemorative, but also programmatic in nature: it embodies an expansionist intention—aimed at enlarging the territories of the Ptolemaic Reign inherited from Philadelphus—which is to be considered one of the factors leading to the breaking out of the Laodicean War. In 246–245 such an expansionist intention translated into a vast Ptolemaic campaign to the western side of the Seleucid Empire (Asia Minor and the Hellespont), again reported in documentary data.[171] This offensive also accompanied the attack to the heart of the Seleucid Empire on the part of Ptolemy III, which evidently was triggered not only by rivalry between Laodice and Berenice, but was rather a long-programmed event that corresponded to precise interests of the Egyptian ruler. The results of this campaign were thwarted by the *seditio domestica*, which forced Ptolemy to return to his country, and by Seleucus II's successful counteroffensive (who in Babylon had been acknowledged as legitimate king as early as 245);[172] yet the Adulis inscription, presenting traits not devoid of autobiographic value, testifies to Ptolemy III's ambitious ecumenical plan. In effect, in this inscription the king portrays himself not only as the "master of the world," surpassing his father and predecessor Ptolemy II in grandness, but also, in line with the role assumed by Ptolemy I in the "Satrap's Stele,"

[169] Lehmann, "Expansionspolitik im Zeitalter des Hochhellenismus: Die Anfangsphase des 'Laodike-Krieges,' 246/5 v. Chr.," 91 ff.

[170] Also Polyaenus (8.50) reports of conquests reaching India, although he does not mention Asia Minor.

[171] On Pap. Haun. 6 and the Kildara inscription, see Lehmann, "Expansionspolitik im Zeitalter des Hochhellenismus," respectively 93 n. 20, and 96 ff.

[172] Lehmann, "Expansionspolitik im Zeitalter des Hochhellenismus," 92 n. 19.

as the avenger for the wrongs in the matter of religion that Egypt had to suffer at the hands of the Persians, who takes his revenge over the Seleucids succeeding the Achaemenids.

Antiochus I of Commagene

The Kingdom of Commagene, which became independent from the Seleucid Empire in an unspecified age (according to some scholars, under Antiochus III; according to others, in about 80 BC, under Antiochus VIII)[173] and whose history is altogether little known, has provided a series of monumental inscriptions, in different parts of the reign, associated with *hierothesia* (tomb-sanctuary)[174] and *temene* dedicated to the dynastic cult. In the *hierothesion* built on the summit of Nemrud Dagh King Antiochus I (69–34 BC) presents himself as the *synthronos* of the great Greek-Iranian deities (Zeus-Oromasdes, Apollo-Mithras, Helios-Hermes, Artagnes Herakles Ares) and of deified Commagene; further *hierothesia* were at Arsameia on Nymphaios—seat of the cult of the father of Antiochus, Mithridates—where Antiochus added his own *timé* and *mneme*; at Arsameia on Euphrates, seat of the cult of the *basileis progonoi*; at Karakuş, seat of the *hierothesion* built by a Mithridates for an Isias (mother of Mithridates I or Mithridates II [in the latter case, wife of Antiochus I]); finally, remains of another *hierothesion* are in Sesönk, near Samosata. In different sites, among them Samosata, the capital of the kingdom itself, there are also *temene* for the cult of the deities and the king's funerary and cult rituals.

The common traits shared by far-apart inscriptions led to tracing the latter back to a unitary archetype, which then adapted over time and to the different settings; with regard to this aspect, their relative chronology has been strongly debated.[175] Among these documents must be

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[173] For a reconstruction of the history of the Kingdom of Commagene, see R.D. Sullivan, "The Dynasty of Commagene," *ANRW* 2.8 (1977), 732–798.

[174] The term is presented in Antiochus I's inscriptions and never used afterwards: it is a neologism which testifies to Antiochus' creativity in shaping the dynastic cult.

[175] The chronology proposed by H. Dörrie, *Der Königskult des Antiochos von Kommagene im Lichte neuer Inschriften-Funde* (Göttingen, 1964), has been criticized by D. Musti, "Sui nuovi testi relativi al culto di Antioco i di Commagene," *RAL* 21 (1966), 57–70, who is convinced that N (the Nemrud Dagh inscription) is the most ancient text and is in fact the archetype for the more recent ones; D. Musti reaffirmed his notion in "Morte e culto del sovrano in ambito ellenistico (in particolare sulle tombe-santuario dei sovrani della Commagene)," in *La mort, les morts dans les sociétés anciennes*, eds. G. Gnoli and J.P. Vernant (Cambridge, 1982), 192–193, discussing new findings.

mentioned the great inscription at Nemrud Dagh (OGIS 383), in the Antitaurus mountain range; this is the seat of the main *hierothesion* of Commagene, destined by Antiochus I to his own cult as deified king, and to do homage to the Greek-Iranian deities as well as to his own Greek-Macedonian and Achaemenid ancestors.[176] There stands a huge tumulus (fifty meters high and one hundred-fifty meters in diameter at the base) flanked by terraces; the eastern and western terraces are adorned with colossi of Antiochus and his tutelary deities, Zeus-Oromasdes, Apollo-Mithras, Helios-Hermes, Herakles Artagnes Ares, and deified Commagene; the walls are decorated with bas-reliefs of the king and his ancestors. The backs of the colossi and the reliefs bear Greek inscriptions; along the bases of the colossi are inscribed the king's sacred law with prescriptions for his cult. The monument, deeply syncretistic in nature, shows roots in Iranian, Anatolian (in particular, Hittite), and Greek traditions, both from an artistic,[177] religious, and cult-related viewpoint;[178] as noted, the inscriptions themselves collected diverse ideologies, among which are those of Eastern rulers and those of the Hellenistic age, both monarchical and polis-centered in nature.[179]

In the inscription on the backs of the deities' thrones at Nemrud Dagh, King Antiochus I explains the motivations of the establishment of the dynastic cult, and issues the sacred law to regulate it. Despite the fact that the inscription adopts the first-person mode[180] and contains "egocentric" elements,[181] the strictly religious nature of its subject matter dilutes its autobiographic content; furthermore, compared with the aforementioned documents, this inscription is particularly close to the

[176] Antiochus I descended from the Achaemenids on his father's side (Aroandes II, ancestor of Mithridates I, married Rhodogune, daughter of Artaxerxes II Mnemon: for this reason the portrait of Darius I is present in the Nemrud-Dagh monument), and from the Seleucids on his mother's side (his mother, Laodice, was the daughter of Antiochus VIII). Cf. M. Carcangiu Pidello, "Intorno a la grande epigrafe del Nemrud-Dagh ed Antioco I di Commagene," *AFLC* 21 (1953), 149–196, 157 ff.

[177] On the monument, see T. Goell, "Nimrud Dagh. The Tomb of Antiochus I, King of Commagene," *Archaeology* 5 (1952), 136–144; ead., "The Excavation of the Hierothesion of Antiochus I of Commagene on Nemrud Dagh (1953–1956)," *BASO* 147 (1957), 4–22.

[178] H. Waldmann, *Die Kommagenischen Kultreformen unter König Mithradates I Kallinikos und seinem Sohne Antiochos I* (Leiden, 1973); Musti, "Morte e culto del sovrano," 198–199; D. Allgöwer, "Antiochos I de Commagène entre sceptre et diadème," *AION (archeol)* 15 (1993), 257–287.

[179] Musti, "Nuovi testi," 65; Id., "Morte e culto del sovrano," 189.

[180] Baslez, "Écriture monumentale," 72.

[181] According to Musti, "Nuovi testi," 59–60.

Eastern models—mainly in the self-glorification of the king—although surprisingly it lacks political content.

In the Nemrud Dagh inscription, as in all Commagene inscriptions, Antiochus I introduces himself as follows:

> The Great King Antiochos Theos Dikaios Epiphanes, the Friend of the Romans and the Greeks, the Son of King Mithradates Callinicus and of Laodice Thea Philadelphos, the Daughter of King Antiochos Epiphanes Philometor Callinicus.

The presentation of the royal titles evidences the use of dynastic names of Seleucid tradition (*Theos*, *Epiphanes)*, the king's intention to relate to Alexander (the sole among Antiochus' ancestors to be attributed the title of *basileus megas*, and whose veneration is manifested also in the cult of Heracles),[182] and special accuracy in genealogic references.

Royal titles are followed by the king's wish to eternalize his actions (building the *hierothesion* and creating his dynastic cult) in inviolable letters (*asylois grammasin … erga charitos idias eis chronon anegrapsen aionion*) (OGIS 383, lines 8–10) by emphasis on the king's *eusebeia*, considered as the source of all blessings (2.11–14); by his firm belief that his *eusebeia* granted him unexpected escape from great dangers, the accomplishment of seemingly hopeless enterprises, and a long and happy life (2.20–23: this statement is an important dating element as it sets the inscription in about 40); lastly, by the affirmation that, again thanks to his *eusebeia*, he turned the kingdom into the abode of all deities (2.25 ff.). The king describes then the building of the *hierothesion dedication of the deities' statues* (2.36 ff.), he also states that he set aside appropriate income for the cult (2.67 ff.), and lastly, he issues the sacred law with the prescriptions for the cult, among which the provision on the celebration of the king's birthday and of the anniversary of his coronation (2.75 ff.).[183]

As noted, the king always "speaks" in the first person, using the pronoun *ego* (never *hemeis*; possessive pronouns alternate instead between *emos* and *hemeteros)*. Further, he often alludes to himself by mentioning his qualities (*charis, phrontis, epimeleia, gnome, pronoia, hyperoche*, and even *tyche*, adopting in this the procedure generally used for deities), and his reign and activities are enumerated in laudatory periphrases (*dynamis eythyches, chresis makariste*, etc.).[184] In particular, the degree of

[182] Allgöwer, "Antiochos I de Commagène," 261 ff.
[183] Dörrie, *Der Königskult des Antiochos von Kommagene*, 29 ff.
[184] Dörrie, *Der Königskult des Antiochos von Kommagene*, 156 ff.

identification between the deities and their *synthronos* Antiochus has been long debated; their equal standing, as suggested by the use of *time* to indicate both the cult of the king and of his deities, has been emphasized by some scholars[185] and overshadowed by others;[186] in this respect, the evaluation of the *dexiosis* (the king and a deity shake hands), whose interpretation is controversial,[187] appears to be settling. In any case, the solemn formulation of the text undoubtedly concurs to express the king's intention of representing himself as a pious man, in full syntony with the deities, and thus as the promoter of his country's welfare, who, also thanks to the establishment of kingdom-wide cult provisions, considers himself as the creator of his people's identity in religious, cultural, and even political terms.[188] Thus, the Nemrud Dagh inscription, a perhaps archetypal variant of a text published in different settings after appropriate adaptations, expresses the king's "leveling intention;"[189] this element embodies the autobiographical significance of the inscription which, albeit weakened by the absence of precise references to the king's political and military activity, yet stands out in the ruler's deliberate expression of his religious and cult-related program.

Conclusions

This study can be now concluded by highlighting two aspects that emerge from the survey.

Firstly, in the Hellenistic age instances of royal autobiographical literature are present, yet significantly episodic in nature. In the absence of precise models (if one excludes the monumental inscriptions of the Near East, situated in Mesopotamic and Achaemenid areas), the autobiographical perspective assumes a multiplicity of forms.

To begin with, it takes the form of both personal memoirs, the *hypomnemata*, and of the related genre of *ephemerides*, court journals. The daily

[185] Dörrie, *Der Königskult des Antiochos von Kommagene*, 201 ff.

[186] Musti, "Nuovi testi," 66 ff.; cf. Carcangiu Pidello, "Intorno a la grande epigrafe del Nemrud-Dagh," 174 ff.

[187] Allgöwer, "Antiochos I de Commagène," 263 ff.

[188] On this aspect, see A. Mannzmann, "Herrschaft unter dem Aspekt königlicher Machtpolitik. Zu den Inschriften Antiochos I. von Kommagene," in *Studien zur Religion und Kultur Kleinasiens. Festschrift für Friedrich Karl Doerner zum 65. Geburtstag am 28. Februar 1976*, eds. S. Sahin, E. Schwertheim, and I. Wagner (Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain) 66 (Leiden, 1978), 565–594.

[189] According to Musti, "Nuovi testi," 70.

drafting of journals and their archival preservation by a secretary seem to have been common practice at the courts of the Hellenistic kings, although the relation between the king's personal memoirs and the drafting of court journals is not always easy to put into perspective. Such a practice, attested for Alexander, the Ptolemies, Antipater and the Antigonids, undoubtedly contributed to preservation of a vast amount of autobiographical material, given the rulers' intention to hand down, through the royal archives, their own "controlled" self-portrayals.

Furthermore, the autobiographical perspective finds its expression in epistolary literature. Letters were attributed to Alexander, Antipater, Antigonus Monoftalmus, and Ptolemy I, and they were sometimes deemed worthy of being collected in volumes and made available, clearly for their historical, biographical and autobiographical value. Evidence of an emendation on the part of Alexander on one of the letters he had sent to his mother is a particularly significant factor, as it confirms the autobiographical value that the kings themselves attributed to the epistolary material connected to them.

To these elements, which seem to validate the hypothesis that the Macedonians must have been particularly interested in preserving epistolary and journal material for its autobiographical value, let it be added the autobiographical nature—albeit differing in degree—of historiography conducted by Ptolemy I, Pyrrhus, and Ptolemy VIII, insofar as their literary output undoubtedly shares the intention of spreading positive self-representations; this holds even for Ptolemy I's production which, being no *hypomnemata* (unlike the works of Pyrrhus and Ptolemy VIII) but rather a history of Alexander, is no "autobiographical work" in the strictest sense of the expression.

Secondly, the findings of the study confirm that in the Hellenistic age autobiography and political self-justification remain closely intertwined, as they were in the classical age. In this respect, as noted, the common denominator in all surveyed autobiographical forms (inscriptions by the Ptolemies and Antiochus I included) is the presence of the precise intention on the part of the king to furnish a "self-portrayal" connoted by primarily self-justifying, propagandistic and legitimizing aims. In line with the classical tradition, the public still prevails over the private dimension: the autobiographical perspective mainly manifests itself in the relations of the Hellenistic kings with their political interlocutors, these comprising, first of all, contemporary and diversified public opinion, which they would address through different channels of communication.

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CHAPTER THREE

THE HELLENISTIC AGE: AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND POLITICAL STRUGGLES

Gabriele Marasco

The majority of the autobiographical literature of the Hellenistic epoch consists of the works of the kings, a fact that is well justified by the clear prevalence of the monarchic institution; but, close to the monarchy of Alexander and to those monarchies generated by the division of his empire, the other forms of government typical of the Greek world also survived, from the tyrannies and the local potentates to the democratic or aristocratic poleis and the federal states. In these generally smaller political realities, the activity of the local politicians persisted, as well as the struggles, the internal contrasts, and the conflicts among the parties, which constituted the stimulus and the subject for the development of writings that drew attention to the actions of their authors. Despite the loss of so great a part of the Hellenistic sources, some important testimonies of this literary genre have survived and allow us to appraise its development, which seems to have followed in substance the orientation of the fourth century, developing the two fundamental themes of the accounts of travels and the political autobiography.

I. Autobiographical Travel Literature and Memoirs: Nearchus

The conquests of Alexander widened geographical knowledge enormously, and they aroused, already among the participants of the enterprise, a wide literature that offered accounts of many lands until then unknown. The greatest part of these works confined itself to providing geographical data in a strict sense, such as the description of the countries, the distances, the characteristics of the populations, the fauna and the flora, the economic resources, and the commercial roads. A notable and meaningful exception is constituted nevertheless by the work composed by Nearchus, a native of Crete but a citizen of Macedonian

Amphipolis, who was among the foremost officers of Alexander and, in the summer of 325, was entrusted by him to drive the fleet in the trip back from the mouths of the Indus, along the coasts of Persia—actually to those of Mesopotamia—where he went up the Tigris to a place near Susa.[1] On his return,[2] he wrote a report[3] that was read to Alexander few days before his death[4] and which seems to still have been consulted by Theophrastus;[5] then he elaborated it in a work entitled Παράπλους (or Ἀνάπλους) τῆς Ἰνδικῆς,[6] which is known from some fragments and, above all, from the ample account of Arrian, who used it as source to narrate the return of Alexander's fleet from India in his *Indiké*.[7]

The opinion according to which Nearchus would have completely obscured his own role[8] is entirely to be rejected on the grounds, above all, of the testimony of Arrian. In effect, it is true that the work of Nearchus contains all the elements typical of a periplus, from the notation of the

[1] On the career of Nearchus, see H. Berve, *Das Alexanderreich auf prosopographischer Grundlage* (Munich, 1926), 2:269, no. 544; C.F. Lehmann-Haupt, *Nr. 61: Νέαρχος*, in J. Papastavru, *Amphipolis. Geschichte und Prosopographie*, *Klio*, Suppl. 37 N.F. 24 (Leipzig, 1936), 99–137; G. Wirth, "Nearchos der Flottenchef," in *Acta Conventus XI Eirene* (Wroclaw, 1971), 615–639 (= *Studien zur Alexandergeschichte* [Darmstadt, 1985], 51–75); A.B. Bosworth, "Nearchus in Susiana," in *Zu Alexander der Grosse. Festschrift G. Wirth* (Amsterdam, 1987), 542–567; G. Wirth, "Nearch, Alexander und die Diadochen. Spekulationen über einen Zusamenhang," *Tyche* 3 (1988), 241–260.

[2] In the spring of 324.

[3] This task had been entrusted to him since the beginning (Arr., *Ind.* 18.4).

[4] Plut., *Alex.* 76.3 (= *FGrHist* 117 F3b). The view of E. Badian ("Nearchus the Cretan," *Yale Class. Stud.* 24 [1975], 167), according to which this information, for which Plutarch expressly quotes the royal *Ephemerides*, would have been inserted in obedience to the will of Nearchus, appears hypercritical, since from one side it exaggerates the influence of the latter in the time of the death of the king, and from the other it denies the particular interest of Alexander in the results of the maritime explorations. On the distinction of that testimony from that in Arr., *Anab.* 7.25.4 concerning the expedition along the coasts of Arabia, see L. Pearson, "The Diary and the Letters of Alexander the Great," *Historia* 3 (1954), 432, 439.

[5] Thphr., *Hist. Plant.* 4.7.3. See W. Capelle, s.v. "Nearchos" no. 3, *RE* 16.2 (1935), 2137; P. Högemann, *Alexander der Grosse und Arabien* (Munich, 1985), 75 n. 27.

[6] The exact title is discussed: see W. Tomaschek, "Topographische Erläuterung der Küstenfahrt Nearchs vom Indus bis zum Euphrat," *Sitzungsber. d. kaiserl. Akad. d. Wiss. Wien* (phil.-hist. Kl.) 121 (1890), Abh. 8.2; Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2B, *Kommentar*, 445; P. Pédech, *Historiens compagnons d'Alexandre. Callisthène—Onésicrite—Néarque—Ptolémée—Aristobule* (Paris, 1984), 163–164.

[7] Arr., *Ind.* 18–42 = *FGrHist* 133 F1. Besides the commentary of Jacoby (*FGrHist* 2B, *Kommentar*, 448–462), see the wider and updated one of N. Biffi, *L'*Indiké *di Arriano*, Introduzione, testo, traduzione e commento (Bari, 2000), 171–239.

[8] See W. Capelle, s.v. "Nearchos," 2152.

stages, the distances,[9] and of the days they stopped,[10] to the ethnographic details and to those on the production and local commerce;[11] he also pays tribute to the tradition of legends[12] and *mirabilia*, accepting fanciful tales on the fauna of India and on some exotic animals, particularly the whales of the Indian Ocean.[13] But these elements, adherent to the tradition of the periplus genre and aiming also to attract the interest of the reader, are entirely secondary in comparison to the narration of the travel and to the political and military aspects of it within the expedition of Alexander and his plans toward the regions coasted along by the fleet, even if it is possible that Arrian stressed this aspect with his criterion of choice. For he affirms that the purpose of the *Indiké* is to describe not the customs of the Indians but the way in which the fleet, departing from India, rejoined Alexander in Persia.[14]

A very important and, for us, essential characteristic of Nearchus' work is, in every case, the strong prominence that the author gives to his own action as the commander in head of the fleet, a stress that animates and conditions the whole narrative. From the account of Arrian it is difficult to decide if Nearchus used the first person or, as did Xenophon, the third one; in every case, a great deal more than the latter, he is constantly in the foreground and he ascribes to himself the merit and the responsibility of the decisions. This peculiarity depends both from on the position of Nearchus, which conferred him a much more exclusive command than that Xenophon had enjoyed among the Ten Thousand, and from the circumstances and from the aims for which he wrote his work.

Nearchus himself, in fact, relates a sour contrast arisen between Onesicritus and himself: at the height of the promontory Maceta, Onesicritus would have sailed directly to the opposite coast of Somalia, shortening the route and avoiding the longest circumnavigation of the Arabic coast, but Nearchus objected that this would have been contrary to the purposes assigned to the expedition by Alexander, who wanted a complete

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[9] The opposite affirmation of Plinius (*Nat. His.* 6.26.96 = *FGrHist* 133 F13: *Onesicriti et Nearchi navigatio nec nomina habet mansionum nec spatia* ...) is denied by the constant data in the narrative of Arrian and by the precise affirmation of Nearchus himself (Arr., *Ind.* 40.9 = *FGrHist* 133 F1.40.9).

[10] Arr., *Ind.* 21.7, 21.13, 38.9.

[11] Arr., *Ind.* 22.5, 27.8–9, 37.2, 41.6–7.

[12] Arr., *Ind.* 31, 37.3.

[13] Arr., *Ind.* 30, 39.4–5.

[14] Arr., *Ind.* 17.6–7; see also 19.9; *Anab.* 5.4.3; F.F. Schwarz, "Arrian's *Indike* on India: Intention and Reality," *East and West* 5 (1975), 193 ff.; P.A. Stadter, *Arrian of Nicomedia* (Chapel Hill, 1980), 118.

exploration of the coasts, the points of landing, and the islands. Alexander ordered that the gulfs be coasted along and that Nearchus take note of the cities on the sea, of the fertile territories, and of those deserts; Nearchus feared, besides, to go to lands deserted and deprived of water. His opinion prevailed.[15]

This episode shows Nearchus to be clearly at odds with Onesicritus, who had been the pilot of the ship of Alexander[16] and was the author of a historical work, a contrast that had to come out sharper because Onesicritus also had a role of considerable importance in the fleet, partly, for technical motives, independent from that of Nearchus,[17] so much that at the end of the expedition both were honored equally by Alexander with a golden crown.[18] On the other hand, while Nearchus continued to stress having been the supreme commander of the expedition,[19] Onesicritus, in the historical work that he wrote on the enterprise of Alexander, attributed such a role to himself.[20] These testimonies and the continuous silence on Onesicritus in the work of Nearchus therefore make believable that the latter composed, or framed, in a definitive form, his own narrative just to disprove the affirmations of the rival and to reaffirm in a clear way his own merits:[21] this aim and Nearchus' position of command explains the dominant role that the narrator assumes in the narrative, and they must constantly be kept in mind both to evaluate its reliability and to understand its orientation and its literary characteristics.

Actually, if from one side some have positively appraised a great deal the reliability of the work of Nearchus, considering it a sincere

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[15] Arr., *Ind*. 32.9–13; see *Anab*. 7.20.9–10 (= *FGrHist* 133 F1e).

[16] Arr., *Anab*. 6.2.3; *Ind*. 18.9 (= *FGrHist* 134 T4; cf. F10, 18, 27); about him see Berve, *Das Alexanderreich*, 2:288, no. 583; T.S. Brown, *Onesicritus. A Study in Hellenistic Historiography* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1949); Pédech, *Historiens compagnons d'Alexandre*, 71–157.

[17] On the debated problem of the respective roles, see, for example, Brown, *Onesicritus*, 9; Badian, "Nearchus the Cretan," 157–159; Pédech, *Historiens compagnons d'Alexandre*, 74 and above all H. Hauben, *Onesicritus and the Hellenistic "archikybernesis,"* in *Zu Alexanders der Grosse. Festschrift G. Wirth*, 1 (Amsterdam, 1987), 569–593.

[18] Arr., *Anab*. 7.5.6 (= *FGrHist* 133 T9a); cf. Högemann, *Alexander*, 79; Hauben, *Onesicritus*, 578–580. In the account of the same Arrian (*Ind*. 42.9) drawn by Nearchus no mention is made of Onesicritus.

[19] Arr., *Anab*. 18.10 (= *FGrHist* 133 F1, 18, 10). Cf. Plut., *Alex*. 66.3.

[20] Arr., *Anab*. 6.2.3 = *FGrHist* 134 F27. Awareness of this contrast and the difficulty to resolve it are perhaps perceptible in the sources that put the two men on the same plan (Strabo 15.2.4, p. 721; Curt. 9.10.3, 10.1.10).

[21] See Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2B, *Kommentar*, 446; Brown, *Onesicritus*, 105 ff.; Badian, "Nearchus the Cretan," 157–159; Wirth, *Nearch, Alexander*, 249–250.

exposure of the events,[22] from the other side Badian has expressed a very negative evaluation, to my notice hypercritical, judging it an "impassioned personal and political *Tendenzschrift*," the result of the frustrated ambition of Nearchus[23] after the failure of his attempt to seize the power making to name king the son of Alexander and the Persian Barsine, whom he had previously married in the weddings at Susa, an attempt that aroused the opposition of the army.[24] Both these views are, to my notice, to be rejected, since they keep in mind neither the real aims of the work, nor its evolution, from the report submitted to Alexander to the edited version built upon it, an evolution whose importance is, to my notice, also confirmed by the literary characteristics of some episodes.

Indeed, from one side it seems to me difficult to doubt the reliability of the descriptive elements that constitute the skeleton of the narrative and that, with every evidence, had already appeared in the first report: the itinerary, the stopping places, the harbors, the presence of water and of supplies or lack thereof, the exploration of the coasts, which, as we have seen, constituted the objective of the expedition and which obviously were required in the report that Nearchus wrote upon his arrival in Mesopotamia. Their substantial reliability has broadly been confirmed and specified by the modern topographical studies;[25] on the other hand, the admiral had no motive to distort the data concerning the populations, the fauna, the flora, the commerce, and the particularities of the places that he had visited, even if his tendency is surely to accept uncritically some fantastic tales that were furnished from tradition or from witnesses who claimed to see what he had not seen,[26] and to develop other ones, offering himself as witness.[27] For all these practical elements, besides the fact that their discovering and disclosing was the main scientific, practical, political, and military issue of the expedition,[28] it will be enough to remember that, still in the time of the

[22] See, for example, Capelle, s.v. "Nearchos," 2152–2153; Lehmann-Haupt, *Nr. 61*, 116.

[23] "Nearchus the Cretan," *passim*, esp. 169. See also Bosworth (below, n. 29).

[24] See Curt. 10.6.10–12 (= *FGrHist* 133 T11) and, concerning the marriage of Nearchus with Barsine, Arr. *Anab*. 7.4.6 (= *FGrHist* 133 T9b).

[25] See particularly Tomaschek, "Topographische Erläuterung," 1–88; A. Berthelot, "La côte méridionale de l'Iran d'après les géographes grecs," in *Mélanges offerts à M. Octave Navarre* (Toulouse, 1935), 11–24; H. Schivek, "Der persische Golf als Schiffharts-und Seehandelsroute in Achämenidischer Zeit und in der Zeit Alexanders des Grossen," *Bonner Jahrbucher* 162 (1962), 43–97; Biffi, *L'*Indiké *di Arriano*, *passim*.

[26] See, for example, *FGrHist* 133 F8.

[27] See Badian, "Nearchus the Cretan," 148.

[28] About the scientific value of the work of Nearchus in various fields, see Capelle,

publication of the final text, many participants were alive who would have been able to belie the errors and the misrepresentations.

The situation is very different if we appraise the narrative elements, in which the direct presence of Nearchus and his work of elaboration are constant and a great deal more than we would want from a travel book. An analysis of the text on the literary plane has pointed out that Nearchus was not only inspired by Herodotus—a model, after all, obvious to the author of a travel account in exotic and unknown lands—but also by the *Odyssey*;[29] the "tragic" inspiration of some episodes and the tendency of the author to develop the romantic elements have also been noticed[30]—a tendency that can have been inspired partly by the model of Herodotus, but that, in my opinion, could have been still more influenced by the very probable reading of Ctesias,[31] the classical author of *Persiká* and *Indiká*, in which the "tragic" and romance-like elements were particularly developed.[32]

This literary revision is capable of conferring prestige and popularity to a narration that aims above all to exalt the role of Nearchus and his personal initiatives, providential for the success of the enterprise and for the salvation of the ships and the crews. The apologetic intent is already evident in the initial scene concerning the trust of the mission. Alexander, timorous for the dangers of the navigation, but animated by the greed to complete his great enterprises, would have been in doubt over the choice of the commander. He turned therefore to Nearchus for suggestions, but none of the candidates suited him: no one was able to run the risk, or they were fearful or otherwise not up to it due to the difficulties of the task. Then Nearchus offered himself, but Alexander objected, because he did not want to expose a friend to such serious labors and dangers. Nearchus insisted, finally getting the approval of Alexander; his nomination encouraged the soldiers and the crews, convinced that the king would never have pushed his friend Nearchus to

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s.v. "Nearchos," 2144 ff.; Pédech, *Historiens compagnons d'Alexandre*, 197–206; Wirth, *Nearchos, der Flottenchef*, 634–635.

[29] See L. Pearson, *The Lost Histories of Alexander the Great* (Cleveland, 1960), 120 ff., 130–131, 133–134 and the remark of A.B. Bosworth ("Arrian and the Alexander Vulgate," in *Alexandre le Grand. Image et réalité*, Entetiens Hardt 22 [Vandoeuvres, 1976], 15 n. 2): "Odysseus, it will be recalled, was not only a wanderer, but a liar!"

[30] See, e.g. Pearson, *Lost Histories*, 131 ff.

[31] Concerning this reading, see also Pédech, *Historiens compagnons d'Alexandre*, 167.

[32] Cf. Marasco, "Ctesia, Dinone, Eraclide di Cuma e le origini della storiografia 'tragica,'" *Studi Italiani di Filologia Classica* 3.6 (1988), 48–67.

face dangers if he had not been sure that they were destined to be saved. Finally, their faith in the fortune of Alexander contributed to the strength of their trust.[33]

This story has been the object of strong criticism by Badian, which widely considered it the fruit of invention, but on the base of feeble arguments. From one side, in fact, he affirms that Alexander was forced to appoint Nearchus because none of the other possible candidates had the necessary experience[34]—an affirmation disproved by the list of possible choices that the same Nearchus furnishes[35]—and above all by the presence of Onesicritus, who commanded his flagship; from the other, his assertion, according to which Alexander would have been very doubtful about the abilities of Nearchus as commander of the fleet because of the setbacks that he had suffered before,[36] is obviously refuted by the final decision. In reality, in my opinion, the whole of the choices of Alexander is perfectly comprehensible: submitting to Nearchus, an official of trustworthy experience and fidelity, the supreme command, he guaranteed that his plans would have been performed to the letter; placing on his side Onesicritus, he assured the fleet the experience of a pilot whom he evidently considered the best available.

Nearchus' narrative would also aim to present himself as the most reliable among the friends of Alexander and to confirm his own fidelity and abnegation,[37] and it seems to me important to observe that it is not quite isolated, since it finds a comparison in the account of the meeting with Alexander in Carmania. Here Nearchus claims that Alexander, struck by the difficulties met by the fleet and by the condition Nearchus and his companions got to him in, did not want him to be burdened by further risks and labors, and intended to entrust the task of continuing the trip up to Susa to another man. Nearchus replied, begging him to reconfirm his command, since he had already completed the most difficult and dangerous part of the enterprise. Alexander then reconfirmed his command, expressing his gratitude.[38]

The account of Nearchus, as we can see, moves between two poles: the initial appointment and the confirmation of the command as a

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[33] Arr., *Ind*. 20. This story certainly comes from Nearchus; see N.G.L. Hammond, "The Speeches in Arrian's *Indica* and *Anabasis*," *Class. Quart*. 49 (1999), 240.

[34] Badian, "Nearchus the Cretan," 155.

[35] Arr., *Ind*. 18.3–10; see Biffi, *L'*Indiké *di Arriano*, 177.

[36] Badian, "Nearchus the Cretan," 156.

[37] See Wirth, "Nearch. Alexander und die Diadochen," 250.

[38] Arr., *Ind*. 36.4–7.

recognition of the merits until then acquired,[39] both characterized by the insistence of Nearchus to introduce his own command as the result of his friendship with Alexander, but also, and above all, his self-abnegation and his ability to face any danger in order to perform the plans of the king, with great personal sacrifice and without any ambition of power. The insistence on this theme, which is the main inspiring motive for the whole story, must be in my opinion connected with his own experience. In the assembly that followed the death of Alexander, in fact, Nearchus had strongly sustained the right to the succession of the child of Barsine, arousing the irritation and the definite opposition of the army, up to the point of the rebellion.[40] Ptolemy was bitterly opposed to his proposal, judging it unworthy that the Macedonians accepted as king the child of a Persian prisoner, and finally the opinion of Perdiccas prevailed: he manifested his own indifference for the power and absolute fidelity to the memory of Alexander, getting the throne for Arrhideus and the position of regent for himself.[41] This event and the behavior of Perdiccas, who had gotten for himself the role to which Nearchus undoubtedly aspired, constituted an evident lesson: in the light of it, we can well understand that Nearchus, by narrating this episode, which had been the apex of his career, intended to underline above all his own abnegation until the sacrifice and the total commitment that he, a Greek, had set in performing the orders of Alexander and serving the Macedonian rule.

Nearchus then takes care to constantly emphasize his unique role of command and its merits: so he highlights his concern to avoid undue hardships and dangers to the crews[42] and stresses his military merits, turning into a real battle a clash with natives of the coast of Gedrosia, who are poorly dressed, worse equipped, and unable to mount an organized resistance.[43] He describes extensively as the effect of a sharp trick the seizure of an unnamed city, which instead, from the very context of the story, appears to be a poor center and unable to defend itself, so that only two archers are sufficient to block the postern and the residents make no attempt to defend themselves.[44]

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[39] Against the hypothesis that the idea of Alexander to replace Nearchus at that moment as commander was due to disapproval of his conduct until then, see Biffi, *L'*Indiké *di Arriano*, 222–223 with further references.

[40] See Curt. 10.6.10–12 (= *FGrHist* 133 T11); on the marriage of Nearchus and Barsine, see Arr., *Anab*. 7.4.6 (= *FGrHist* 133 T9b).

[41] Curt. 10.6.13 ff.; Iustin. 13.2.

[42] Arr., *Ind*. 23.4, 32.12; *Anab*. 7.20.10.

[43] Arr., *Ind*. 24.

[44] Arr., *Ind*. 27.8–29.9.

The same intent of praising himself can be seen in the story of the encounter with the whales in the Indian Ocean, which is a very vivid description of the perturbation, of the fear of the sailors, and the commitment of Nearchus to encourage them, bringing his own ship at the head of the fleet and lining up the ships in formation for battle. Nearchus orders then to launch the battle cry and to make noise by playing the trumpets and beating the oars so the whales, frightened, dive into the depths, and, not long after, come up astern; the sailors, admiring the boldness and the shrewdness of Nearchus, applaud and compliment him.[45] The episode, evidently suitable to strike the imagination, is narrated also by Onesicritus and by other sources, but without any mention of Nearchus;[46] it is believable that the latter exaggerated his own role, which must have been confined to putting into practice the advice given by local helmsmen or whoever was experienced in navigating those waters.

The same aim of underlining his own merits in removing all the fears of his sailors in front of the dangers of those unknown and mysterious waters inspires the story concerning the island of Nosala, where Nearchus landed some men to show the groundlessness of the legends that were told, according to which whoever set foot on it disappeared. Nearchus uses the episode to present himself as a wise and cultured person, an issue that must have easily succeeded with the soldiers and the ignorant sailors, but that aroused the disapproval of Arrian.[47]

Still, the desire to underline his own absolute fidelity to Alexander corresponds with the narration of the contrast with Onesicritus about the course to follow at the height of the promontory Maceta.[48] The story is, in my opinion, entirely believable, if we keep in mind the respective roles of the two men: Onesicritus, to whom the responsibility to lead the fleet was entrusted, was inclined to prefer the briefest and most direct course, while Nearchus, who had the strategic command, had to pay greater attention to the military and political goals that Alexander had prearranged.

The meeting with Alexander in Carmania is the most important episode in the narration of Nearchus, since it concludes the most adventurous part of the trip. The evaluation of the method and the historical reliability of Nearchus depends largely on it. It has been considered

[45] Arr., *Ind.* 30; Strabo 15.2.11–13, p. 725 (= *FGrHist* 133 F1.30, 30b).
[46] *FGrHist* 134 F31; Diod. 17.106.6–7; Curt. 10.1.12.
[47] Arr., *Ind.* 31.
[48] Arr., *Ind.* 32.9–13; *Anab.* 7.20.9–10 (= *FGrHist* 133 F1.32.9–13; 1e).

by one scholar a literary masterpiece,[49] but it has also been the object of highly critical analysis by Badian, who has stressed the limits of its credibility.[50] It is worthwhile therefore to reexamine it, paying attention, from one side, to the exact reconstruction of the events based on the different sources, and from the other to the narrative method adopted by the author. The story of Nearchus' land travel is broadly inspired by pathetic and romantic elements, evident in the details about the anxiety of Alexander over the fate of the fleet, in the vicissitudes and the dangers of travel from the coast to the place where he meets Alexander in Carmania, especially in the romance-like story of Nearchus and his companions meeting with the explorers sent to welcome them, the missed recognition and the final identification.[51] It appears evident that the literary revision is founded upon the models of tales of adventure and the tragedies, but above all, very interesting to me are the details about the aspect of Nearchus and his companions that makes them unrecognizable: "with their hair long, unwashed, covered with brine, wizened, pale from sleeplessness and all their other distresses."[52] The comparison with Odysseus shipwrecked in the land of the Phaiakeans springs to mind spontaneously, a comparison that Nearchus himself seems to want to suggest so as to strengthen the seriousness of the dangers faced on the sea and the conditions of extreme exhaustion by the example of the hero who was their model more than anyone else.

The reliability of this story has been contested by Badian, who from one side has held doubtful the whole account of Nearchus' five days of travel from the coast to the place of the meeting with Alexander, holding, on the basis of Diodorus (17.106.4), that the meeting took place instead at Salmous, a town on the coast; from the other side, he has considered as pure invention the difficulties on the way back—the threat and repeated attacks of the barbarians—since furthermore the outward journey occurred in maximum security.[53] Nevertheless, the testimony of Diodorus does not appear trustworthy, and the meeting with Alexander must have been located rather near the today's Khanu, in the hinterland,

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[49] See Berve, *Das Alexanderreich*, 2, 269; Lehmann-Haupt, *Nr. 61*, 110.

[50] Badian, "Nearchus the Cretan," 160ff.; see also the doubts of P.A. Brunt (*Arrian. Anabasis Alexandri and Indica*, 2 [Cambridge, Mass., 1976], 403 n. 1) and Wirth (*Nearch, Alexander und die Diadochen*, 249 n. 39).

[51] Arr., *Ind*. 34.

[52] Arr., *Ind*. 34.7; see 35.3, where the same impressions are related to the meeting with Alexander.

[53] Badian, "Nearchus the Cretan," 161 and 165–166.

so confirming the testimony of Nearchus.[54] On the other hand, the latter explains the attacks suffered in the travel back with the fact that the satrap of the region had been executed by order of Alexander, and his successor, Tlepolemus, had not consolidated his authority yet.[55] The fate of the first satrap, the Persian Astaspes,[56] is testified from Curtius Rufus: suspected of having prepared a rebellion while Alexander was in India, he was submitted at first to investigation, then executed after the Dionysiac ceremonies would be celebrated in Carmania.[57] On the basis of these events, the story of the journeys of Nearchus appears perfectly comprehensible: while in fact on the trip there he had crossed a territory checked by a satrap subject to Alexander, his return had been hindered by the hostility of the partisans of Astaspes, irritated by the execution of the Persian satrap and not yet restrained by the authority of his successor.

Nevertheless, in my opinion, just the testimony of Curtius Rufus leads to doubt the reliability of another element of the narrative of Nearchus, one more connected with his own person. Nearchus affirms, in fact, that the satrap of Carmania, having learned of his arrival, gave news of it to Alexander; but subsequently, since nobody arrived, he was suspected and put under custody. When Nearchus arrived later, Astaspes threw himself at Alexander's feet, explaining what happened and asking his intercession; Nearchus got his liberation from the king.[58] This tale appears in contradiction with the fate of Astaspes, as attested not only by Curtius Rufus, but also by Nearchus himself; in fact, also on the basis that the latter could have defended the satrap against suspicion raised by his giving news of Nearchus' arrival, his role in the affair of Astaspes was no doubt very marginal in comparison to the accusations that really provoked the imprisonment and the execution of the satrap. Nearchus must have exaggerated his own role not only to give greater importance to the expectation of his arrival, but also to present himself as a magnanimous person and still to underline his own influence as a friend to Alexander.

Nearchus narrates then that Alexander celebrated the safety of the army with sacrifices and athletic and art contests, and that he organized a procession; Nearchus participated in the first ones while the

[54] See P. Goukowsky, *Diodore de Sicile. Bibliothèque historique. Livre XVII* (Paris, 1976), 264; Biffi, *L'*Indiké *di Arriano*, 220.
[55] Arr., *Ind*. 36.8.
[56] See on him Berve, *Das Alexanderreich*, 2, 89 no. 173.
[57] Curt. 9, 10, 21 and 29.
[58] Arr., *Ind*. 34.1–5; 36.1–2.

troops showered ribbons and flowers on him.[59] Badian considers this account to a large extent invented, since from one side Arrian (*Anab.* 6.28.3), on the basis of Aristobulus, narrates that Alexander celebrated sacrifices, athletic games and artistic contests to exalt the conquest of India and the salvation of the army in Gedrosia, but without mentioning Nearchus, excluding so his presence. From the other side, Diodorus (17.106.1–4) narrates a Dionysiac cortege, then the theatrical contests near Salmous, which occurred during the arrival of Nearchus. Plutarch (*Alex.* 67.1–68.1) affirms that Nearchus arrived during the carrying out of the Dionysiac procession, while Curtius Rufus (10.1.10) dates his coming to "not a lot of time later." Badian concludes therefore that Nearchus, who arrived one or two days after the ceremonies, must have made a small falsification of the chronology to insert himself in the front rank among the guests of honor of that ceremony.[60]

The arguments of Badian nevertheless are invalidated from an analysis of the sources. From one side, in fact, it is evident that Diodorus, Plutarch, and Curtius Rufus, beyond the differences of details owed to confusion and the use of different immediate sources, derive from an unitary tradition, that of the *vulgata*, in which the Dionysiac cortege of Alexander had an essential importance; but it is impossible to reconcile this version with that in the *Anabasis* of Arrian, that openly disproves it. Arrian, in fact, mentions the Dionysiac cortege as a pure legend, to which neither Ptolemy nor Aristobulus nor any other reliable author make any hint; then, on the basis of Aristobulus, he narrates that Alexander performed sacrifices and proclaimed artistic and athletic contests for the conquest of India and the safety of the army in the crossing of the desert of Gedrosia.[61] Immediately afterward, he affirms that at the same time Nearchus came near the coasts of Carmania and, with few companions, reached Alexander in the hinterland where he made a report of his enterprises; the king sent him back to continue sailing up to Susiana and to the mouths of the Tigris. Arrian concludes that he will narrate separately this trip using Nearchus as source.[62] It seems evident to me that this later part of the narrative derives not from Aristobulus, but

[59] Arr., *Ind.* 36.3.

[60] Badian, "Nearchus the Cretan," 162–165.

[61] Arr., *Anab.* 6.28.1–4. About these ceremonies, see, e.g., P. Goukowsky, *Essai sur les origines du mythe d'Alexandre (336–270 av. J.-C.)*, 2, *Alexandre et Dionysos* (Nancy, 1981), 47–64.

[62] Arr., *Anab.* 6.28.5–6.

rather from Nearchus,[63] whom Arrian has already read but from whom he refrains reporting more widely until in his later work, *Indiké*. Insofar, the narrative in the *Anabasis* cannot constitute the proof that Nearchus arrived after the ceremonies and did not participate in them. Rather, it is believable that Nearchus arrived when they were carried out and took part in them, given Alexander's satisfaction with his accomplishments; the distortion, in this case, consists only in the fact that Nearchus wanted to narrate the sacrifices and the contests as consecrated to his enterprise, while they were already carried out for other motives.

Nearchus' account, as it is more broadly preserved by Arrian in the *Indiké* and more briefly in the *Anabasis*, finally contains an element of remarkable interest: Nearchus introduced himself as the only interlocutor of Alexander—at first presenting him a report of the enterprise, then receiving from him the confirmation of his command—after an interview that would have reaffirmed, as we have seen, the themes already expressed at the time of the first appointment. This story appears contradicted by other sources: in Diodorus (17.106.4–107.1), the report of the enterprise until then is generically attributed to the sailors, and the king, after having listened to their account, orders to the "commanders of the fleet" to continue their travel up to the mouth of the Euphrates. Curtius Rufus (10.1.10–16) agrees with Diodorus concerning the report made to Alexander, but he is more precise in a particular main point: he affirms that Nearchus and Onesicritus came to Alexander, he attributes to them both the report, and he concludes that the king, desirous to have further data, ordered them to continue traveling along the coast up to the Euphrates, then to go up the river to Babylon. These details are entirely reliable, given the rank and the function developed also by Onesicritus: we have therefore to conclude that Nearchus has obscured the role of the pilot, introducing himself as the only interlocutor of Alexander and adding a personal interview, the details of which are scarcely believable,[64] confirming the ideas already expressed in the narrative of his first appointment.

The account of Nearchus comes to an end with the celebrations of the arrival at Susa: Alexander held sacrifices and games and Nearchus was

[63] As Badian himself ("Nearchus the Cretan," 166 n. 48) admits dubiously; but just this circumstance removes every value to the claimed silence of Aristobulus on the participation of Nearchus in the celebrations in Carmania.

[64] In Diodorus and in Curtius Rufus, as well as in Plutarch (*Alex*. 68.1 and 6), the confirmation of the command of Nearchus is introduced as an obvious and almost automatic fact.

pelted with flowers and ribbons; he was awarded a golden crown together with Leonnatus.[65] The contentions of Badian,[66] who has denied the participation of Nearchus in the ceremony at Susa, expressing objections on the topographical side, are not acceptable.[67] On the other hand, the role of Nearchus in the ceremonies at Susa is confirmed by some information in Arrian's *Anabasis*, derived from other sources, according to which he then married Barsine and he was awarded a golden crown along with Leonnatus, Onesicritus, and other companions of Alexander.[68] These marks of respect evidently constituted for Nearchus the crowning of his enterprise and the confirmation of the total approval of Alexander. It is necessary, however, to notice that also on this occasion he did not fail to strongly underline the facts on a very personal basis: the mention of the golden crown similarly attributed to Leonnatus, with whom Nearchus had happily collaborated[69] and with whom he must have had a close friendship,[70] is accompanied in fact by the absolute silence on the crown conferred also to Onesicritus.[71]

The account of the stay in Carmania was completed then by an episode that Arrian omits in the *Indiké*: the suicide of Calanus.[72] This story was famous and it does not surprise that it aroused the interest of Nearchus, who undoubtedly was an eyewitness;[73] it is important, however, because it confirms for us the ampleness and the orientation of the revision that Nearchus performed on the first draft of his work, constituted by the report that he had presented to Alexander, also tightly adding some episodes not connected with the matter of his periplus.

In conclusion, the analysis of the extant testimonies points out that the work of Nearchus had characteristics that do appear very unusual within the ancient tradition: to the simple account of the journey, with its stages

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[65] Arr., *Ind*. 42.8–9.

[66] "Nearchus the Cretan," 166–167.

[67] See A.B. Bosworth, *Nearchus in Susiana* in *Zu Alexander der Grosse. Festschrift G. Wirth* (Amsterdam, 1987), 549, 558–559; Biffi, *L'*Indiké *di Arriano*, 238.

[68] Arr., *Anab*. 7.4.6; 7.5.5–6.

[69] Arr., *Ind*. 23.5–7.

[70] See Pédech, *Historiens compagnons d'Alexandre*, 209.

[71] The bestowal of this crown is the object of strong doubts by Jacoby (*FGrHist* 2D, *Kommentar*, 470) and Brown *Onesicritus*, 12; see also Biffi, *L'*Indiké *di Arriano*, 238–239; but see otherwise Pearson, *Lost Histories*, 84; Badian, "Nearchus the Cretan," 166.

[72] *FGrHist* 133 F4 = Arr., *Anab*. 7.3.6.

[73] See Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2B, *Kommentar*, 463. On Calanus, see Berve, *Das Alexanderreich*, no. 396, 2:187–188; G.C. Hansen, "Alexander und die Brahmanen," *Klio* 43–45 (1965), 356–359.

and the geographical, economic, and anthropological characteristics, it overlaps with a historical narration entirely worthy of a memoir, rich in details of war events, adventures, dangers, and vicissitudes, and animated by a continuous apologetic aim where the author was constantly in foreground, with his firm command and his initiatives, but also, as we have seen, with his grudges, his polemics, his friendships, and his enmities. The objective of the work, beyond the narration of the facts, it is to exalt the narrator, and to this goal Nearchus devotes himself completely, not only amplifying and underlining his own role well beyond the precedent of Xenophon, but also dramatically underlining the course of many events according to a narrative technique inspired much more by the epic and the romance than by the precedents of the autobiographical literature.

The singularity of the work of Nearchus seems then to me to be underlined in comparison with the other travel books, which were quite diffuse in the age of Alexander and the Diadochs. Androsthenes of Thasos, who participated in the enterprise of Nearchus and subsequently performed an exploration of the coasts of Arabia organized by Alexander according to his expansionistic plans in that area, wrote a periplus—of which few fragments are extant—concerning some aspects of the geography and the economy of those regions, particularly the fishing of the pearls and the flora of the island of Tylos (Bahrein).[74] Still less remains of the work of Ortagoras, who remains for us little more than a name.[75]

A great deal wider are the fragments of Megasthenes, who was ambassador of Seleucus and his satrap of Arachosia Sibyrtius to the Indian king, Chandraguptas, and who visited his capital Palimbotras.[76] Some have believed that his work didn't aim so much to offer a better knowledge of India, but rather to produce it as a perfect political model, in support of the politics of the Seleucids;[77] but, beyond this possible political aim, the fragments don't contain any allusion to the person of the author, and Arrian strongly doubts the ampleness of its direct knowledge of India.[78]

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[74] *FGrHist* 711; see Berve, *Das Alexanderreich*, 2.40 no. 80; F. Pfister, "Das Alexander-Archiv und die hellenistisch-römische Wissenschaft," *Historia* 10 (1961), 31–32; C. Dognini, "Androstene di Taso e il *Periplo dell'India*: tre nuovi frammenti?," *Invigilata lucernis* 23 (2001), 83–92.

[75] *FGrHist* 713.

[76] *FGrHist* 715; see E. Schwartz, s.v. "Megasthenes," no. 2, *RE* XV 1 (1931), 230–326.

[77] See A. Zambrini, "Gli *Indiká* di Megastene," *Annali Sc. Norm. Sup. Pisa* 3.12 (1982), 71–149; 15 (1985), 781–853.

[78] Arr. *Ind.* 5.1, 7.1 (= *FGrHist* 715 T2b, F12).

On the other hand, Patrocles wrote a report of his own travel exploration of the coasts of the Caspian Sea,[79] which he had conducted on behalf of Seleucus and which had a notable importance within the politics of the Syrian dynasty;[80] also in his fragments nothing makes one think that the personal role of the author was particularly underlined.

II. Political Autobiography

The Hellenistic age saw a strong development within biography, to a large extent due to the work of the Peripatetics;[81] nevertheless, it doesn't seem to correspond with an analogous interest in autobiography, of which few traces remain. The only Peripatetic who has left some trace in this field is in fact Demetrius of Phalerum, who governed Athens for ten years (317–307) on behalf of Cassander; chased by Demetrius Poliorcetes, he went in exile to Thebes, then to Alexandria, where he had an important role in the foundation of the Museum.[82] His government in Athens was obviously the object of strong polemics, both for his pro-Macedonian orientation, and for the ample legislative action that he undertook under the influence of Theophrastus to reform the Athenian law and to fight the excessive luxury.[83] His politics aroused strong resistance[84] and a sour

[79] *FGrHist* 712.

[80] See Marasco, "La fondazione dell'impero di Seleuco I: espansione territoriale e indirizzi politici," *Rivista Storica Italiana* (1984), 301–337.

[81] See, e.g., F. Leo, *Die griechisch-romische Biographie nach ihrer literarischen Form* (Leipzig, 1901; reprint Hildesheim, 1965), 85 ff.; Momigliano, *Biography*; J. Mejer, *Diogenes Laertius and his Hellenistic Background, Hermes*, Einzelschr. Heft 40 (Wiesbaden, 1978), 60–95.

[82] Concerning Demetrius, his government in Athens, and his works, see chiefly W.S. Ferguson, *Hellenistic Athens* (London, 1911), 38–94; E. Bayer, *Demetrius Phalereus der Athener* (Darmstadt, 1969); C. Habicht, *Athen. Die Geschichte der Stadt in hellenistischer Zeit* (Munich, 1995), 62–75; W.W. Fortenbaugh, E. Schütrumpf, eds., *Demetrius of Phalerum. Text, Translation and Discussion* (New Brunswick, 2000); L. O'Sullivan, *The Regime of Demetrius of Phalerum in Athens, 317–307 BCE* (Leiden, 2009).

[83] See S. Dow and A.H. Travis, "Demetrios of Phaleron and his Lawgiving," *Hesperia* 12 (1943), 144–165; H.-J. Gehrke, "Das Verhältins von Politik und Philosophie im Wirken des Demetrios von Phaleron," *Chiron* 8 (1978), 149–193; Bayer, *Demetrius Phalereus*, 25 ff.; R.H. Stichel, "*Columella-mensa-labellum*. Zum Form der attischen Grabmäler im Luxusgesetz des Demetrios von Phaleron," *AA* 107 (1992), 433–440; Habicht, *Athen*, 62–65; J.D. Mikalson, *Religion in Hellenistic Athens* (Berkeley, 1998), 46–74; M. Gagarin, "The Legislation of Demetrius of Phalerum and the Transformation of Athenian Law," in *Demetrius of Phalerum*, 347–365; R. Bernhardt, *Luxuskritik und Aufwandsbeschraenkungen in der griechischen Welt, Historia*, Einzelschr. Heft 168 (Stuttgart, 2003), 270 ff.

[84] Already in 312 the Athenians turned to Antigonus Monophthalmus to get his sup-

hostility that didn't even stop with his exile, as attested particularly by the fierce accusations against his action in Athens from Democharesof Leuconoe, an exponent of the anti-Macedonian party,[85] the destruction of his statues,[86] and the death sentence in absentia that followed his exile.[87]

Demetrius tried to answer to these accusations with some writings of his: indeed Strabo, who defends the character of the government imposed by Cassander as not tyrannical, affirms that Demetrius not only did not put an end to the democracy, but even restored it, as shown by the treatises he has written about that form of government.[88] Diogenes Laertius, on his behalf, has preserved for us the titles of works *In Defense of the Constitution* and *On the Ten Years*,[89] in which Demetrius must have defended his own political action against his detractors.[90] It's uncertain whether these works were more linked to the trends of autobiography or to those of oratory,[91] but no certain fragment is extant and those that Jacoby attributes to them as dubious fragments[92] don't reveal a particular autobiographical content, but rather they confine themselves to defending the legislative action of Demetrius, blaming particularly the luxury in the theatrical representations and the avarice in the exploitation of the mines.[93] The only autobiographical item is contained in a work on Socrates and is related to the intervention of Demetrius as legislator to increase the government benefit for two poor women descending from Aristides.[94] Demetrius, in substance, seems to have wanted to defend, more than himself, his own legislative activity, with arguments based on the restoration of the austere Athenian tradition and on the defense of legality.

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port against Cassander (Diod. 19.78.4). About the "tyrannical" government of Demetrius and his personal luxury, see also the harsh judgments of Duris (*FGrHist* 76 F10; see R.B. Kebric, *In the Shadow of Macedon: Duris of Samos, Historia*, Einzelschr. Heft 29 [Wiesbaden, 1977] 21, 31–32) and Pausanias (1.25.6).

[85] *FGrHist* 75 F4 = fr. 7 Marasco (G. Marasco, *Democare di Leuconoe: politica e cultura in Atene fra IV e III sec. a.C.* [Florence, 1984] and commentary, 181–190).

[86] Strabo 9.1.20, p. 398 = *FGrHist* 228 T3b.

[87] Dion. Hal., *De Dinarcho* 3 = *FGrHist* 228 T4b = 566 F66 (Philochorus).

[88] Strabo, loc. cit.

[89] Diog. Laërt. 5.81 = *FGrHist* 228 T1.

[90] About the possible relation with the polemic of Democharesm, see Habicht, *Athen*, 68.

[91] See Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2C, *Kommentar*, 640.

[92] *FGrHist* 2C; *Text*, 960.

[93] *FGrHist* 228 F25 and 35.

[94] *FGrHist* 228 F45a.

A fragment preserved by the lexicon Suidas testifies the work of Theodorus, strategos of the Rhodians. In his *Memoirs* he mentions panic fear, affirming that, when it occurs, it is worthwhile to remain armed and to keep a cool head; referring very clearly to the imminence of a battle, he narrates to have raced among the rowers, shouting to them to stay in their tents, all armed.[95] The view according to which the fragment would derive rather from a writing of tactic[96] is denied both from the testimony of the lexicographer, who quotes the *Memoirs* (Ὑπομνήματα) of Theodorus, and above all from the autobiographical content of the only fragment. The hypotheses formulated about the identification of the author[97] stay nevertheless uncertain, and everything that can be said is that Theodoros was an admiral of the Rhodian fleet, and that his work narrated events in which he had participated. The content of the brief fragment, which underlines the shrewdness of the protagonist in a difficult circumstance, clearly points out the encomiastic trend of the narration. The fragment remains valuable, however, as a testimony to the existence and diffusion of autobiographies and memoirs of politicians and soldiers in the Hellenistic age, which have hardly left any traces, both because their authors were only of local importance and because their contents will obviously have flowed into historiographical works with a wider circulation.

The fragments of the *Memoirs* of Aratus of Sicyon (271–213 BC), a political man of notable importance, are of a greater interest for our study. As the leader of the Achaean League, to which he assured a strong development, he fought for a long time with success against the tyrants sustained by the Macedonians, until, threatened by the military and political successes of the king of Sparta Cleomenes III, he ended up concluding an alliance with the king of Macedonia Antigonus Doson, which allowed him the victory against Sparta at the moment, but, after the accession of Philip V, was the cause of his political downfall and of his death.[98] Ara-

[95] *FGrHist* 230 F1 (= Sud., s.v. Πανικῶι δείματι, Adler 4.21).

[96] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2C, *Kommentar*, 653 and already, dubiously, H.E. van Gelder, *Geschichte der alten Rhodier* (The Hague, 1900), 434.

[97] See C. Torr, *Rhodes in Ancient Times* (Cambridge, 1885; reprint 2001), 134; Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2C, *Kommentar*, 653–654.

[98] About Aratus and his life, see, above all, A. Ferrabino, *Il problema dell'unità federale nella Grecia antica. I. Arato di Sicione e l'idea federale* (Florence, 1921); F.W. Walbank, *Aratos of Sicyon* (Cambridge, 1933); W.H. Porter, *Plutarch's Life of Aratus*, with Introduction, Notes and Appendix (Dublin-Cork, 1937); J.A.O. Larsen, *Greek Federal States. Their Institutions and History* (Oxford, 1968), 106 ff.; R. Urban, *Wachstum und Krise des*

tus wrote *Memoirs* (Ὑπομνήματα) in more than thirty books[99] that are known only through Polybius and Plutarch;[100] but the attitude of these two authors and the motives for which they used his work are quite different. For Polybius, indeed, Aratus is above all the true initiator of the rise of the Achaean League, the political organism of which the historian himself was an exponent and whose history is a fundamental part of its work. Already in the introduction, in fact, Polybius affirms that his work will begin from 220, connecting himself with the conclusion of the work of Aratus;[101] subsequently, introducing the history of the Achaean League, he credits Aratus with having been the initiator and the organizer of the project to unify the Peloponnesus, and he affirms that he will make only a summary outline of his political activity, since Aratus has written very clear and sincere *Memoirs*, in which he narrates his own deeds.[102]

Aratus is then the essential source for the history of the Achaean League from the liberation of Sicyon (251)[103] to the battle of Sellasia (221);[104] Polybius particularly defends his reliability against many, who lent faith instead to Phylarchus,[105] a contemporary historian, but bitterly hostile to Aratus and a supporter of Cleomenes. Introducing his sour

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achäischen Bundes. Quellenstudien zur Entwicklung des Bundes von 280 bis 222 v. Chr., *Historia*, Einzelschr. Heft 35 (Wiesbaden, 1979), 6 ff.; É. Will, *Histoire politique du monde hellénistique (323–330 av. J.-C.)*, 1 (Nancy, 1979²), 319 ff., with further references; P. Green, *Alexander to Actium: the Hellenistic Age* (London, 1993), 115 ff.

[99] *Vita Arat*. 79.12 = *FGrHist* 231 T1.

[100] The statement of Porter (*Plutarch's Life of Aratus*, XV), according to which Aratus' *Memoirs* would be mentioned by Photius as used by Sopater in his *Eclogues* is wrong; Photius (*Bibl*. cod. 161.104b) affirms instead that Sopater had epitomized Plutarch's biography of Aratus. The quotation in the anonymous life of Aratus of Soli (see the preceding note) is, in my opinion, founded on Polybius. About the pro-Achaean narrative of Pausanias (2.8–9) and Aratus' influence on it, see the accurate analysis of C. Bearzot, *Storia e storiografia ellenistica in Pausania il Periegeta* (Venezia, 1992), 147–167.

[101] Polyb. 1., 3.1–2 = *FGrHist* 231 T2a.

[102] Polyb. 2.40.4 = *FGrHist* 231 T3.

[103] Will, *Histoire politique*, 1:319 and 321 with further references; Porter (*Life*, XXXIII–XXVI) however considers possible a dating in 252. On the episode, see also A. Griffin, *Sykion* (Oxford, 1982), 79 ff.

[104] See M. Gelzer, "Die Achaica im Geschichtswerk des Polybios," *APAW* (1940), 2 (= Id., *Kleine Schriften*, 3 [Wiesbaden, 1964]), the detailed analysis of Walbank (*A Historical Commentary on Polybius*, 1 [Oxford, 1957], 215–291), and K.-E. Petzold, *Studien zur Methode de Polybios und zu ihrer historischen Auswertung*, "Vestigia" 9 (Munich, 1967), 25 ff. and 113 ff. On the ample discussion concerning the credibility of the narration of Polybius, see, e.g., Urban, *Wachstum und Krise*, 9 ff. with further references.

[105] About this historian, see J. Kroymann, s.v. "Phylarchos," *RE* Suppl. 8 (1956), 471–

polemic against Phylarchus,[106] he affirms that it is necessary, because on the Cleomenian War he had chosen to follow Aratus as source.[107] Finally, in the beginning of the fourth book, concluding the introductory part of his work, Polybius affirms that he wanted to briefly summarize the events that happened before the death of Antigonus Doson, Seleucus II, and Ptolemy III; he has decided to begin the detailed narration from here, since the work of Aratus comes to an end at this point and he wants to be his successor.[108]

Plutarch's attitude is very different: he has broadly used the *Memoirs* in his biography of Aratus[109] and, in a smaller measure, in those of Agis and of Cleomenes,[110] but he always compares them with other versions, particularly with the contrasting one of Phylarchus. Plutarch, in effect, dedicated the biography of Aratus to his descendant Polycrates of Sycion[111] as an example to his sons;[112] but, despite this eulogistic intent, he doesn't miss frequently underlining many errors, faults, and weaknesses of the protagonist, on the basis of the hostile tradition and also of his own judgment.[113] The criticisms in the biographies of Agis and Cleomenes are still stronger: Plutarch, according to his own hostility against the Macedonian domination of Greece and his admiration of these kings, renovators of the ancient Spartan discipline, bitterly exalts their political and military deeds[114] and censures Aratus' choice of allying himself with Antigonus Doson.[115]

489; E. Gabba, "Studi su Filarco. Le biografie plutarchee di Agide e di Cleomene," *Athenaeum* N.S. 35 (1957), 3–55 and 193–239; T.W. Africa, *Phylarchus and the Spartan Revolution* (Berkeley, 1961).

[106] Polyb. 2.56–63 (= *FGrHist* 81F 53–56); see Walbank, *Hist. Comm.*, 1:159 ff.; Africa, *Phylarchus*, 38 ff.; K. Meister, *Historische Kritik bei Polybios*, "Palingenesia" 9 (Wiesbaden, 1975), 93–108.

[107] Polyb. 2.56.1–2 = *FGrHist* 231 T4.

[108] Polyb. 4.1.9–2.1 = *FGrHist* 231 T2b.

[109] See the detailed analysis of W.P. Theunissen, *Ploutarchos' leven van Aratos* (Ph.D. diss., Nijmegen, 1935), 4 ff.; Walbank, *Aratos*, 16–19; A.J. Koster, *Plutarchi vitam Arati edidit, prolegomenis commentarioque instruxit* (Leiden, 1937), 15 ff.; Porter, *Life*, 15 ff.

[110] See G. Marasco, *Commento alle biografie plutarchee di Agide e di Cleomene* (Rome, 1981), 1:30 ff. and *passim*.

[111] Plut., *Arat*. 1.1; see C.P. Jones, *Plutarch and Rome*, 40; G. Marasco, ed., *Vite di Plutarco*, 5 (Turin, 1994), 543–544.

[112] Plut., *Arat*. 1.5.

[113] See Marasco, *Vite di Plutarco*, 5:548–550.

[114] See Marasco, *Commento*, 1:42 ff.

[115] Plut., *Arat*. 38.5–12; *Cleom*. 16.3–8.

In effect, the opposite perspectives from which Polybius and Plutarch consider the final part of the politics of Aratus narrated in his *Memoirs* depend not only on the different likings, respectively for the Achaean League and for Sparta, but also on a very different political ideal: for the Achaean Polybius the choice of Aratus, also debatable and difficult to defend, had guaranteed anyway the survival of his League; for the Greek Plutarch, instead, it had subdued Greece again to these same Macedonians that Aratus had fought and insulted for decades, so that the diffused accusations of incoherence appeared correct and the conclusion unavoidable that it would have been better if Aratus had accepted rather the domination of Sparta.[116]

This different perspective, on the other hand, really influences the inspiring motive itself of the *Memoirs*: since, in fact, they concluded with the end of the Cleomenian War, it is logical to believe that they were written to defend Aratus from the sour accusations against him for the choice to ally himself with the Macedonian king, a choice that shocked many Greeks and exposed him to accusations of political incoherence, of betrayal and even, subsequently, to bitter personal mockery, when Philip V, guest of Aratus, seduced his daughter-in-law Polycratia.[117] The work of Aratus was therefore not a confession or a justification of the activity developed by a retired politician, but, very clearly, an apologetic writing, composed to defend his precise choices by an active, influential and busy leading character still engaged in the political struggle. If therefore the fate of the *Memoirs* were to be a source of data for later authors, such was not its original intent, which we need to keep in mind to appreciate their method, their content, and their orientation, however much the scarce fragments allow us and, to a larger extent, the testimonies that very clearly derive from them.

Some initial specification is necessary with regard to the testimony of Plutarch who, shortly after having mentioned the liberal education that Aratus had received in Argos, concludes: "Therefore he applied himself to the eloquence in a manner perhaps less intense than became a political man; and yet he is said to have been a more ornate speaker than some judge from the *Memoirs* which he left, and which he had composed in haste off-hand, and in the first words that occurred to him."[118]

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[116] Plut., *Arat*. 38.6–7; *Cleom*. 6.3–7; see Marasco, *Commento*, 2:476 ff.
[117] Plut., *Cleom*. 16.5; *Arat*. 49.2; Liv. 27.31.8, 32.21.24; see Porter, *Life*, 83.
[118] Plut., *Arat*. 3.3 = *FGrHist* 231 T6.

Aratus was, certainly, a man not of culture but of action, and the aim itself of his work, which was political and practical, excluded a particular interest for the style and the literary achievements. But do we necessarily have to conclude that he stayed entirely deaf to the orientations of his time and the tastes of the public? If the scarce and brief fragments, none of which brings to us the words of the author, are of no help, an entirely different conclusion seems suggested to me by some ample testimonies in Plutarch's biography, which derives undoubtedly from the *Memoirs*.[119]

We can already consider the story of the liberation of Sicyon, with the details about the anxiety provoked by the watchdogs, the dialogue between the sentinel and their keeper, the misunderstanding of the liberators about the motives for the mistake of the latter, the alternation of hopes and fears in the danger of being detected, the difficulty to climb the walls with ladders and finally setting the house of the tyrant on fire, which was visible up to Corinth.[120] Although many details stay uncontrollable, given the complete absence of other testimonies, and are reasonable in general, the story strongly shows however a dramatic and romance-like tone, aiming to underline the difficulty of the enterprise, the ability of Aratus, and the rapid sequence of hope and desperation in the hearts of the participants by a technique that involves the reader, interests him in the events, and produces expectations for the unpredictable turns of the story and the mixing in of the foresight of Aratus and the unpredictable role of fate. The same characteristics appear in the briefest story of the vicissitudes of Aratus during the crossing toward Egypt, resolved by the unpredictable stroke of luck of the passage of a Roman ship.[121]

Still more romance-like and full of dramatic turns, it is the next narration that is the key episode of the action of Aratus against the Macedonian domination: the liberation of the Acrocorinthus. Already the initial circumstances, with the surprise of the availability of Erginus, his conversation with the banker Aegias and above all the reversal of situation twice—the servant Technon at first discloses the whole plan to the wrong brother and then is saved by the unexpected arrival of Erginus[122]—illuminate the dramatic course of the narrative. This trend continues, then, and is even more emphasized by the details about the

[119] I refer, without further references, to the commentaries cited above, note 106; "Quellenforschung" is not the aim of this book.
[120] Plut., *Arat*. 6.1–9.2.
[121] Plut., *Arat*. 12.
[122] Plut., *Arat*. 20.

sudden changes of the situation provoked by the alternation of the light of the moon and the dark brought by the clouds as if a miracle; by the very vivid description of the vicissitudes of the soldiers of Aratus left in rearguard, of the confusion, the lights, and the noises provoked by the unexpected attack; and by the reaction of the Macedonian garrison—with the surprise provoked by the full moon again bright reflecting on the weapons of the soldiers of Aratus, who so seem more numerous—up to the final apotheosis, with the sun just risen illuminating the victory.[123]

Beyond his historical reliability, the narrative reveals a sure psychological skill in exploiting the surprise element to bind the reader and to make him more and more interested in the story and prone to appreciate the success of Aratus and the help that fortune had guaranteed to his political and military initiative. To seal the enterprise, Aratus added the description of his apparition in public in the theater of Corinth just freed: "… taking his spear in his right hand and slightly inclining his knee and his body, he supported himself upon it and stood thus for a long time silently receiving their applause and acclamations, their praises of his valor and their congratulations for his success."[124]

This passage still underlines the fundamental motive of the whole narrative in the *Memoirs* about the politics of Aratus against the tyrants and the Macedonian domination: the confluence, on the one hand, of Aratus' virtue and his political giftedness, and on the other hand the favor of fortune that makes possible and crowns his achievements; but also notable is the dramatic representation of Aratus who puts in relief his exhaustion, representing him in a plastic posture that brings him, quite clearly, close to the model of the statues of the heroes.[125]

The literary character of these episodes can have been accentuated by the stylistic revision of Plutarch, and it is believable that their romantic patina was influenced by the comprehensible nostalgia of the elderly Aratus for the epic of its youth. But in any case the dramatic and romance-like character of these narrations needs to be strongly underlined, which well agree with the taste of the contemporaries and with the diffused

[123] Plut., *Arat*. 21–23.

[124] Plut. *Arat*. 23.3. On the derivation of this passage from the *Memoirs*, see the considerations of Porter (*Life*, 659), whose conclusion that this work was written in the third person stays, however, entirely hypothetical.

[125] In my opinion, the clean analogy with the representation of Cleomenes in Sparta after the battle of Sellasia (Plut., *Cleom*. 29.3) is worth noting, by which the "tragic" historian Phylarchus underlined the dramatic character of the fate of his hero (see Marasco, *Commento*, 2:590).

custom of the "tragic historiography," of which the hostile Phylarchus was an exponent and for which he was blamed both by Polybius and Plutarch.[126] After all, Polybius himself was not quite insensitive to the flatteries of "tragic history,"[127] so testifying the grip of a trend that was consistent to the spirit of the times.

However, these dramatic episodes pertinent to the first part of the career of Aratus—in which he was engaged also with rash initiatives to eliminate the tyrants and to free Greece from Macedonian domination—clash very clearly with the following, much duller, narrative in Plutarch's biography, limited to war events and to military initiatives concerning the period in which the mature and reflective Aratus played anymore a great deal the weapons of politics and diplomacy. We can believe that this contrast reflects in wide measure the characteristics already current in the *Memoirs*, in which Aratus had to exalt above all his politics of the first period, crowned by the liberation from the Macedonian domination of a wide part of the Peloponnese, of Megara and of Athens, and to appear instead more reluctant and more prudent about his following politics, characterized by struggles against other Greek states (the Aetolians and Sparta) and by deep dissent among the same Peloponnesians, culminating in the alliance with Macedonia. From this perspective, the literary characteristics of the *Memoirs* served the apologetic objectives on the political side that were at the base of this work.

The fundamental aim of Aratus stayed, however, the political one: the *Memoirs*, written following the alliance with Antigonus and the sour criticisms that it had aroused, served above all to justify the choice of Aratus, in the light of his whole political action, which led to the affirmation of the Achaean League and the triumph of the federal ideal. Aratus aimed at presenting himself as the defender of the Greek liberty and the champion of the struggle against the tyrants and against Macedonian domination,[128] and to this directive he remained strictly faithful through all of his narration. The purposes of his work, nevertheless imposed reticences, silences, and at times also lies concerning some embarrassing

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[126] Polyb. 2.5. 6–16 (= *FGrHist* 81 F56); Plut., *glor. Ath*. 345e; *Arat*. 38.12; *Them*. 32.4 (= *FGrHist* 81 T2, F52, and 76); see Walbank, *A Commentary*, 1:159 ff.; Africa, *Phylarchus*, *passim*; Marasco, *Commento*, 1:26 ff.

[127] See, e.g., Walbank, "Φιλίππος τραγῳδούμενος," *Journ. Hell. Stud*. 58 (1938), 55–68; E. Mioni, *Polibio* (Padua, 1949), 133–134.

[128] On the subject of the struggle against Macedonia in the political thought and in the action of Aratus, see the considerations of P. Treves, "La tradizione politica degli Antigonidi," *Rend. Acc. Lincei*, 6:8 (1932), 178 and 189–190.

facts, beginning with the period in which, after the conquest of the Acrocorinthus, Aratus was found involved mainly in struggles not against the tyrants and the Macedonians anymore, but in military and political affairs that concerned others Greek independent states, mainly the Aetolian League and Sparta.

The difficulties and the embarrassments that these struggles provoked are already testified by the fragments concerning the Aetolian invasion of the Peloponnese in 241 and the intervention of the Spartan king, Agis, then allied with the Achaeans, who Aratus sent back, avoiding engaging himself in a battle to prevent the enemy to cross the isthmus.[129] Plutarch reports that, according to Baton of Synope,[130] the Spartan king refused to fight although Aratus had given the order; "but he has not read what Aratus wrote on the subject, urging in self-defense that he thought it better, because by now the farmers had gathered in almost all their crops to allow the enemies to pass by, instead of risking everything in a battle."[131] In the biography of Aratus, then, Plutarch reports very clearly still according to the *Memoirs*, that Aratus distinguished himself in that war when Agis solicited him to battle: he opposed and had to sustain many insults, sneers and pranks against his weakness, but the fear to pass for coward didn't make him abandon what he considered the public interest, and he allowed the enemies to enter the Peloponnese. When, however, they sacked Pellene, Aratus assailed them suddenly and defeated them.[132]

The explanation that Aratus gives about his decision to send back the Spartans can reflect real circumstances, but it is not worth it to explain the choice: the coming of the Aetolians in the Peloponnese would have in fact put in danger every Achaean city, forcing Aratus to engage in battle, however, as it really happened when the Aetolians pillaged Pellene. It is unbelievable, therefore, that he turned to easily abandon the defensible positions on the isthmus and to give up the Spartan aid. Aratus offers here a version that serves to a large extent to exalt his own abnegation to the interests of the Achaean League and, above all, to hide the true motives for his decision. Rather, keeping in mind the social reforms just effected by Agis in Sparta and the testimony of Plutarch on the admiration and the hopes that the Spartan army's march had aroused in the Peloponnese and

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[129] See Marasco, *Commento*, 1:302 ff. with further references.
[130] Plut., *Ag.* 15:4 = *FGrHist* 268 F7; see Marasco, *Commento*, 1:36 and 316.
[131] Plut., *Ag.* 15.4 = *FGrHist* 231 F1.
[132] Plut., *Arat.* 31.1–3 = *FGrHist* 231 F2.

on the consequent fears of the rich,[133] it is worthwhile to conclude that the resolution of Aratus was due above all to the fear of the magnates of the Achaean League that the Spartan reforms also aroused social troubles in the rest of the Peloponnese.[134] Aratus, evidently, was silent on this argument, since the persistence of strong social contrasts in the cities of the Achaean League was a factor contrary to the politics of pacification between rich and poor that Aratus had pursued since the liberation of Sicyon, when he had acted as a mediator using the money that he had succeeded in getting from Ptolemy;[135] the contrast between the prudent and moderate politics of Aratus in the social field and the extreme one of the Spartan reformers was, in effect, an essential characteristic of the opposing propagandas, reflected in the respective versions of Aratus and Phylarchus.[136]

Concerning the war against the Aetolians, however, Aratus had a good hand to sustain the prudence of his decision, given the victory achieved in Pellene, and he put that success in relief by a narration that had to be dry and incisive. Plutarch, in fact, broadly narrates, on the basis of Phylarchus, a dramatic episode on the sack of Pellene, during which the Aetolians would have been terrified and upset by the sight of a female prisoner with a helmet on her head, giving them the impression that the goddess Artemis had appeared;[137] the Pelleneans instead attributed their salvation to the priestess who had brought out of the temple the statue of the goddess, terrifying the enemies. The biographer finally concludes: "Aratus, however, in his *Memoirs*, makes no mention of such a thing, but says that after routing the Aetolians and bursting into the city with them as they fled, he drove them out by main force, and slew seven hundred of them."[138] The version of Phylarchus aimed, with every probability, to diminish the merits of Aratus in the victory, attributing it to the diffused

[133] Plut., *Ag.* 14.3–5, undoubtedly from Phylarchus: see Marasco, *Commento*, 1:303 with further references.

[134] See. K.J. Beloch, *Griechische Geschichte*, 4.1 (Berlin, 1927^2), 626; Walbank, *Aratos*, 54; Larsen, *Greek Federal States*, 308; Will, *Histoire politique*, 1:36.

[135] See Cic., *De off.* 2.23.82 (directly from Aratus or via Panaetius); Plut., *Arat.* 12.1, 14, who reflects Aratus' version. The source of Pausanias (2.8.3) exasperates this version, keeping silent the role of Ptolemy and perhaps allowing to intend that Aratus composed the contrasts in Sicyon by his own money.

[136] See Marasco, "Storia e propaganda durante la guerra cleomenica. Un episodio del III secolo a.C.," *Rivista Storica Italiana* 92 (1980), 5–34.

[137] Plut., *Arat.* 32.1–4. See Marasco, "Filarco e la religione," in *Miscellanea E. Manni* (Rome, 1979), 4:1389–1402.

[138] Plut., *Arat.* 32.5 = *FGrHist* 231 F2.

terror among the Aetolians, while the Pelleneans praised the faith and the sagacity of the priestess. Aratus claimed all the credit for himself instead, limiting himself to a dry narrative of the events and underlining that his own military abilities and foresight had resolved the situation without risking the dangers of a field battle.

Aratus, however, was not averse also to the lies to defend his own actions, particularly concerning his attempts to free Athens from the Macedonians. Plutarch affirms, in fact, that he incurred the criticism and the reproach of the Achaeans themselves, because he tried to appropriate the Piraeus at a time when they had concluded a truce with the Macedonians and they respected the armistice: "(Aratus) lays the blame upon Erginus, with whose aid he had effected the capture of Acrocorinthus. He says that Erginus attacked the Piraeus on his own private account, and that when his ladder broke and the enemy was pursuing him, he kept calling upon Aratus by name, as if he were there, and thus deceived and made his escape from them."[139]

Plutarch rejects this justification, observing from one side that Erginus would not have had the means to try alone such an enterprise, and from the other side that Aratus had shown, by his continuous attempts, how much he cared to occupy the Piraeus.[140] We can believe that he resounds here the accusations in Phylarchus, but it is also plausible that such accusations had really spread among the Achaeans themselves, irritated by the lack of respect for the truce and by the initiatives of Aratus that risked provoking a war with Macedonia for objectives that, to the majority of them, would seem hardly important and of no use. Beyond this contingent episode, Aratus didn't deny at all that the liberation of Athens had been one of the fundamental aims of his action: Plutarch reports that in the *Memoirs* he affirmed to have suffered very much and to have exposed himself to great dangers to free Athens from the garrison and from the Macedonians.[141]

The central element of the work of Aratus naturally had to be the most controversial aspect of his politics: the alliance with Antigonus Doson that, in the eyes of many, had to appear a denial of the activity

[139] Plut., *Arat*. 33.2 = *FGrHist* 231 F3.

[140] Plut., *Arat*. 33.4–5. On these raids and their chronology, see Porter, *Life*, LIII–LVII; M. Feyel, *Polybe et l'histoire de Béotie au IIIème siècle avant notre ère* (Paris, 1942), 98.; Habicht, *Athen*, 165–166.

[141] Plut., *Cleom*. 16.5 = *FGrHist* 231 F4b. On the distinction here between the Macedonians and the garrison, composed to a large extent by Athenian citizens and mercenaries, see Marasco, *Plutarco. Vite*, 5:824 n. 62.

until then done against the Macedonian domination. The version in the *Memoirs* tried to answer these accusations by alleging justifications, but it also resorted to meaningful silences. Polybius, in fact, introducing the narration of the first diplomatic contacts already started by Aratus with Antigonus with the Megalopolitans as intermediaries in 227—when still the military situation of the Achaeans was not at all helpless[142]—underlines the fears of Aratus for the harsh negative reactions that his initiative would have aroused among the Achaeans themselves, and affirms that for this very motive, in his *Memoirs* he didn't make any hint to the mission committed to the Megalopolitans.[143]

While Polybius justifies the choice of Aratus as the consequence of the threat from the "tyrant" Cleomenes, Plutarch instead condemns it as contrary to all of his preceding politics and ruinous for Greek liberty. In the biography of Aratus he stresses that the latter, at this point, euphemistically called "allies" those same Macedonians whom he had repeatedly beaten and insulted in his *Memoirs*; the biographer affirms then that, if Cleomenes were "illegal and tyrannical," it was always also the king of Greek Sparta. Plutarch concludes that Aratus defended himself with all his strength alleging the necessity (ἀνάγκη), but observes that such affirmation was denied by the same fact that he had begun the negotiations with Antigonus far before necessity manifested itself, as not only the hostile Phylarchus attested, but also Polybius.[144] In the biography of Cleomenes, then, Plutarch confirms his judgment, remembering that in the *Memoirs* Aratus had spoken evil of Antigonus Doson and condemning the fact that he had rejected the austerity of the Spartan tradition, "and what he denounced as the most dreadful among the misdeeds of Cleomenes, the abolition of wealth and the alleviation of poverty."[145]

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[142] On these first contacts, on the complexity of the diplomatic relationships that brought the alliance between the Achaean League and Macedonia and on the sharp critics addressed against Aratus, see J.V.A. Fine, "The Background of the Social War of 220–217 BC," *Amer. Journ. Phil.* 61 (1940), 129–165; E. Bickerman, "Notes sur Polybe II: Les négociations entre Aratos et Antigonos Doson," *Rev. Ét. Gr.* (1943), 287–304; Walbank, *Commentary*, 1:247 ff.; E.S. Gruen, "Aratos and the Achaean Alliance with Macedon," *Historia* 21 (1972), 609–625; M. Daubies, "Un chassé-croisé diplomatique dans le Péloponnèse au IIIe siècle avant J.-C.," *L'Antiquité Classique* 42 (1973), 123–154; D.P. Orsi, *L'alleanza acheo-macedone. Studio su Polibio* (Bari, 1991) with further references.

[143] Polyb. 2.47 = *FGrHist* 231 F4c, T5.

[144] Plut., *Arat.* 38.6–12 = *FGrHist* 231 F4a.

[145] Plut., *Cleom.* 16.4–7 = *FGrHist* 231 F4b.

Despite the conciseness of the testimonies of Plutarch, simple allusions within a polemic against the justification of Aratus, it is possible to reconstruct his argumentation. Aratus stressed in the first place the absolute necessity that he found in consequence of the deadly threat of Cleomenes to the Achaean League. To such end, he kept completely silent his first secret diplomatic relationships with Antigonus and stressed the theme of the dangerousness of Cleomenes, which was due to his audacity and his tyrannical politics. This last argument was also of value in connecting the action against the Spartan king to the whole political past of Aratus, always inspired to struggle against the tyrants, thus countering the accusation of political incoherence. Aratus finally availed himself of the threat posed by Cleomenes on the social plan, which had a double value: from one side, in fact, since the abolition of the debts and the redistribution of lands were traditionally measures characteristic of tyrants,[146] it made sense to confirm the tyrannical character of the regime of Cleomenes; from the other side, it served to condemn the dangerousness of Cleomenes for the social order of the cities of the Peloponnese,[147] contrasting his revolutionary measures to the politics of Aratus in the social field, inspired to moderation and settling problems through arbitration and agreement.

Concerning then the break of the truce with Cleomenes at the beginning of the campaign of 225, Aratus complained about the fact that the Spartan king, after having refused to go to the meeting of the Achaean League held in Argos, had sent a herald to declare war not to Argos, but to Aegium, with the purpose of preventing the preparations of the enemy.[148] Aegium was the normal seat of the Achaean meetings,[149] but the choice of Cleomenes corresponded to strategic motives, and, in this case, Aratus had a relatively easy job in justifying with this stratagem the following conquest of Argos by the Spartan king.

Finally, worthy of note is the story of the stratagem by which Aratus succeeded shortly after to save himself in Corinth. Perceiving that the Corinthians inclined toward Cleomenes, he summoned them in the

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[146] This argument was used against the reformatory Spartan kings since the epoch of Agis IV (Plut., *Ag.* 7.8; see Marasco, *Commento*, 1:73–74 and 194 with further references).

[147] On the reliability of these fears, see, e.g., Gabba, *Studi su Filarco*, 22; P. Oliva, *Sparta and her Social Problems* (Amsterdam, 1971), 248.

[148] Plut., *Cleom.* 17.4 = *FGrHist* 231 F5.

[149] See A. Aymard, *Les assemblées de la confederation achaïenne* (Bordeaux, 1938), 277 ff.; the choice of Argos for that particular meeting was due to the fact that it was an extraordinary assembly.

bouleuterion and hurried without their knowledge to the gate of the city, where he climbed on a horse and ran away to Sicyon:

> The Corinthians were so eager to get to Cleomenes at Argos that, as Aratus says, all their horses were ruined. Aratus says also that Cleomenes upbraided the Corinthians for not seizing him, but letting him escape; however, Megistonous came to him, bringing from Cleomenes a request for the surrender of Acrocorinthus (which was held by an Achaean garrison) and an offer of a large sum of money for it; to which he replied that he did not control affairs, but rather affairs controlled him. This is what Aratus writes.[150]

This story still aimed to clearly complete the justification of the alliance with Antigonus as a choice forced by necessity, independent from Aratus' will, and to underline his disinterestedness stressed by the refusal of the monetary offers of Cleomenes and of the proposals as to how to settle the matter that the Spartan king advanced through his stepfather Megistonous. But it was also useful, in my opinion, for introducing a new element that Aratus had to develop in the following narrative of the campaigns in the Peloponnese. In effect, the betrayal carried out by the Corinthians that had delivered their city to Cleomenes allowed to charge them with betrayal of the Achaean League and to justify the decision of Aratus to deliver to Antigonus that same Acrocorinthus that he had once freed and restored to the Corinthians. From this perspective, we must indeed examine yet the bitter accusations by Phylarchus against the Achaeans for torturing and killing Aristomachus of Argos and reducing the inhabitants of Mantineia to slavery, who were all guilty of having gone voluntarily over to Cleomenes[151]—accusations which, as Plutarch attests, concerned above all Aratus personally and constituted a fundamental motive for blaming his conduct.[152] It is evident that Polybius' defense of these actions—that they were a correct punishment for the traitors—had to be already put forward by Aratus so they could justify his own conduct as imposed by necessity and be consistent with the political ideal he pursued until then.

But the most convincing seal and, at the same time, the most effective illustration of the methods and the aims that Aratus pursued in his work, is given, in my opinion, in a passage concerning the meeting held

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[150] Plut., *Cleom*. 19.2–5 (= *FGrHist* 231 F6); see *Arat*. 40.2–6, also from the *Memories*, with larger details about Aratus' escape.

[151] Polyb. 2.56–60 (= *FGrHist* 81 F53–54); see Walbank, *Commentary*, 1:259–270; Africa, *Phylarchus*, 30–32 and 36; Meister, *Historische Kritik bei Polybios*, 93–108.

[152] Plut., *Arat*. 44.6, 45.6–9.

at Aegium, at which the Achaeans ratified the alliance with Antigonus and the surrender of the Acrocorinthus. Plutarch reports that the travel from Sicyon was dangerous, since Cleomenes was camped in front of the city:[153]

> The citizens tried to detain him, beseeching him not to go and refusing to let him expose himself while the enemy were near; and the women and children were clinging to him and tearfully embracing him as a common father and savior. Nevertheless, after encouraging and comforting them, he rode out on horseback to the sea, accompanied by ten friends and by his son, who was now a young man.[154]

The passage, undoubtedly derived from the *Memoirs*, reveals the deepest aim of this work: Aratus appears here as the solicitous father of his country, regardless of any danger for himself and even for his son, ready for everything for the good of his fellow citizens, surrounded by the affection of men, women, and children, who see in him the only salvation from the extreme danger. The artifices of the rhetoric and the appeal to the pathetic reveal themselves here in the most evident way and seal the conclusive and most discussed moment of the political activity of Aratus, furnishing a justification that had to appear as the only possible way to explain a so radical change of his politics.

Aratus' *Memoirs*, in conclusion, answered to practical and immediate political necessities, aiming to defend the action of their author by the methods that were common in the literature of their genre. Even if the narrative, purely historical, could appear exhaustive and reliable to a party-man as Polybius, it aimed to underline the political role of the protagonist and to defend his conduct, not avoiding at all the usual methods of the genre, from the exaggeration of his own successes to the accusations against the adversaries, up to the open lies and to the no less meaningful silences. On the other hand, the *Memoirs* joined the bare narrative of the events with the adhesion to some literary patterns characteristic of their age, with a notable tendency to the dramatic and the romance-like, which undoubtedly corresponded to the tastes of the public.

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[153] On the problem of the chronology and the contrast with the narration in Plut., *Cleom.* 19.9, see Porter, *Life*, LXXXII and 77; J.A.O. Larsen, *Representative Government in Greek and Roman History* (Berkeley, 1966), 166.

[154] Plut., *Arat.* 42.1–2.

Judging from the whole of the surviving testimonies, Felix Jacoby concluded that the diffusion of autobiography in the Hellenistic age would have been very feeble, not remotely comparable to that attested in the Roman world among the commanders of the Republican age and then still among the imperators;[155] but is this conclusion really justified? It would be strange indeed that the Hellenistic age, which had seen the affirmation and the full maturation of biography, had neglected autobiography. In reality, we must remember above all the conditions in which the Hellenistic literature has been transmitted to us. We must also remember how little has remained of the historiography of that age, which was nevertheless very rich and variegated, or that nothing is preserved of the historical encomiastic literature, including Polybius' eulogy of Philopoemen, known only through the reference of the author himself.[156]

We know that the cities, in the Hellenistic and then in the Roman age, used to entrust the charge to write the local history to chroniclers and rhetors, but almost no trace has remained of these works,[157] save some names of their authors,[158] because the events narrated in them were mainly of local interest. It's no marvel therefore, in my opinion, that the testimonies remaining of the autobiographic works of the Hellenistic kings are less numerous than those of the Roman emperors, or that the autobiographies of obscure dignitaries or politicians of the Greek cities have had a much smaller diffusion than that which the political struggle had bestowed upon the memoirs of the commanders who created the Roman rule. Nevertheless, the development of this literature in the Hellenistic age must have had a notable influence on the birth and on the development of the autobiography in Rome, uniting itself, as we will see in the following chapters, with the autochthonous traditions of the *elogia*. It is useful to remember on this subject that some among the principal authors known of Roman autobiographies and memoirs were men imbued with Greek culture and that they wrote their works in Greek.

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[155] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2C, *Kommentar*, 639.

[156] Polyb. 10.21.6; see P. Pédech, "Polybe et l'Eloge de Philopoemen,'" *Rev. Ét. Gr.* 64 (1951), 83 ff.; R.M. Errington, *Philopoemen* (Oxford, 1968), 232–236.

[157] With the notable exception of Memnon's history of Heraclea on the Pontus (*FGrHist* 434).

[158] See, e.g., K. Meister, s.v. "Local chronicles, local history," in H. Cancik and H. Schneider, eds., *Brill's Encyclopaedia of the Ancient World. New Pauly, Antiquity*, 7 (Leiden, 2005), 762–763.

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CHAPTER FOUR

REPUBLICAN ROME: AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND POLITICAL STRUGGLES

José M. Candau

The name of Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus, Hannibal's conqueror, heads the catalog of autobiographical works by Roman authors. Written in Greek, we know of only one existing reference to it, made by Polybius,[1] who describes it as a letter addressed by Scipio to Philip (Philip V of Macedon). The relevant affirmations that we can gather from Polybius' referral are the following: (1) Many stories full of falsehoods circulated about Scipio; fed by his fame, these stories attributed the military successes of the Roman leader to chance, fortune, and the protection of the gods. (2) Rather, it must be believed that Scipio pretended to act under divine inspiration in order to instill courage in his troops. Wisdom, foresight, ingeniousness, and cleverness constituted the factors that lead to his success. (3) This is confirmed both by the testimonies of those who shared their existence with Scipio (Laelius, with whom Polybius had spoken about this matter, is concretely cited), as well as by Scipio himself. In his *Letter to Philip*, he clearly sets out the calculations and reasoning he employed in order to achieve his military triumphs in Iberia, among which was the conquest of New Carthage.[2]

The formal features of the *Letter to Philip* are easily explained. Its use of the Greek is not only attributable to the known philhellenism of the author, but also to the fact that the first Roman historians (Fabius Pictor, Cincius Alimentus, Postumius Albinus, Gaius Acilius) used this language. Furthermore, letters were often used as vehicles for autobiographical literature.[3] The general wreckage of early Latin literature—including works that used Greek—can explain, finally, the fact that only

[1] Plb. 10.2.1–10.9.3 (= Jacoby, *FGrHist* 232 = Peter, *HRR*, fr. 1, 1:45–46).

[2] Now Cartagena.

[3] Jacoby, *FGrHist*, Zweiter Teil B (*Kommentar zu 106–261*), 656–657; J. Sykutris, "Epistolographie," *RE*, Suppl. 5 (1931), 202; P. Cugusi, "L'epistolografia: modelli e tipologie di comunicazione," in *Lo spazio letterario di Roma Antica*, eds. G. Cavallo, P. Fedeli, and A. Giardina, 2 (Rome, 1990), 398.

one mention has reached us of the *Letter to Philip*, that of Polybius. Consequently, Misch presents it as a writing of political propaganda ("politische Flugschrift"): after his victory over Hannibal, Scipio's high reputation and the exceptional status that he enjoyed (twice consul, *princeps senatus* in 199, 194 and 189, censor in 199)[4] as well as his family, motivated the attacks his political adversaries made on him to invoke the pretext of the liberty of the Republic, that is, the equality of all of the noble houses. The *Letter to Philip* would thus have constituted a defense from such attacks; Misch supposed it to have been, essentially, an apologetic work.[5]

Nonetheless, evidence exists that appears to discredit Misch's hypothesis. Cicero offers it when he asserts that he does not have access to any work written by Scipio.[6] Now, if the letter had had any important political significance, Cicero probably would have mentioned it. Scullard tries to unite this evidence with that of Polybius in the following way: Scipio is said to have written a letter at the request of King Philip V, with whom he had entered into contact and attained a certain degree of friendship in the year 190, while warring against Antiochus III. Philip, unhappy with the versions that were circulating about Scipio's exploits, had thus supposedly asked the Roman general to send him a truthful account of his deeds. Therefore, Scipio's letter would have been an answer intended to satisfy the monarch's curiosity. However, although Roman generals were accustomed to publishing memoirs and accounts of their undertakings, this custom did not take root until the second half of the second century BC. The *Letter*, therefore, would have been a private document that was stored away from public eyes in the Scipios' family archive. Thanks to his friendship with Scipio Aemilianus, Polybius would thus have been able to access the archive and consult the document.[7]

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[4] Cf. Broughton, *MRR*, 2:555, 3:71.

[5] Misch, *Autobiography*, 1:241–243. Regarding the political controversy unleashed around Scipio and, more precisely, regarding the so-called "Trials of the Scipios," see Scullard, *Scipio Africanus: Soldier and Politician* (Bristol, 1970), 216–224; for a more recent treatment, see J.C. Saint-Hilaire, "Citoyenneté et droit du vot: à propos du process des Scipions," in *The Roman Middle Republic. Politics, Religion, and Historiography (Papers from a conference at the Institutum Romanum Finlandiae, September 11–12, 1998)*, ed. C. Bruun (Rome, 2000), 177–194.

[6] Cic., *Off.* 3.4: *Nulla enim eius ingenii monumenta mandata litteris, nullum opus otii, nullum solitudinis munus extat*.

[7] Scullard, *Scipio Africanus*, 11. This argument appears already developed in Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2B (n. 3), 656–657, and, even earlier, in Peter, *HRR*, 1:CXVII–CXVIII.

The assumption that Scullard sets forth enjoys ample acceptance.[8] Nonetheless, although it is a possible hypothesis, it does not provide a satisfactory answer. The main reason is that the arguments used are of a strictly personal character. Philip's alleged curiosity is personal; furthermore he was, on one side, a Roman friend and ally in the war against Antiochus, but, on the other, he also had fought against the Roman armies in the two first Macedonian wars. The incentive that moves Scipio is also personal.[9] The sources speak only of an ease and good understanding that arose between the Roman leader and the king of Macedon during the war against Antiochus III.[10] Friendship between the two is a conclusion that modern authors extract from Polybius' reference. Now, to explain events or historical data—and the *Letter to Philip* must be considered a historical datum—via an argument impossible to verify and situated in the terrain of personal sentiments does not, in principle, constitute an ideal procedure. It is possible, on the other hand, to sketch out the historical and political coordinates that framed the gestation of the *Letter to Philip*. This will not prove in a determining way the character of the document, its orientation or historical significance. However, it will be possible to outline a probable hypothesis regarding this question. When dealing with fragmentary historiography, outlining a probable hypothesis is, in the majority of cases, the only goal one can aspire to.

Political life, where one's own self-affirmation constitutes a factor of primary importance, was a propitious field for the development of ancient autobiography. The political battles that mark the crisis of the Roman Republic especially stimulated the appearance of autobiographical writings. The significant personalities that dominated the scene of those struggles often composed *commentarii* (the Latin equivalent of

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[8] It was previously defended by F.W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius, II, Books 7–18* (Oxford, 1967), 204. See also R.G. Lewis, "Imperial Autobiography, Augustus to Hadrian," *ANRW*, 2.34.1 (1993), 634; P. Scholz, "Sullas *commentarii*—eine literarische Rechtfertigung. Zu Wesen und Funktion der autobiographischen Schriften in der späten Römischen Republik," in *Förmen römischer Geschichtsschreibung von den Anfängen bis Livius*, eds. U. Eigler, U. Gotter, N. Luraghi, and U. Walter (Darmstadt, 2003), 174. Regarding Roman private archives, see P. Culham, "Archives and Alternatives in Republican Rome," *CPh* 84 (1989), 104–105. Cf. Plin., *Nat. His.* 35.7: *tabulina codicibus implebatur et monimenta rerum in magistratu gestarum*.

[9] The friendship between Scipio and Philip is discussed by Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2D (n. 3), 656–657; see also F.W. Walbank, *Philip of Macedon* (Cambridge, 1940), 211.

[10] Liv. 37.7.15, 28.18.6; App. *Syr.* 23; Mac. 9.5. It must be observed that this account of the sources attests to Scipio's personal charm and the ease he had in attracting whoever entered into contact with him; with regard to this point see Scullard, *Scipio Africanus*, 234–235.

the Greek ὑπομνήματα)[11] in which they set forth their political trajectory, reported their services to the *res publica*, and recorded the qualities that were credited by their deeds.[12] If the influx of Hellenism represents an undoubted ingredient in the development of Roman autobiography, it is common to highlight the indigenous roots (local pride, the practice of *laudatio funebris*, the typical Roman tendency for stylized self-representation) that contributed to the emergence of the genre. Although all of this literature has been lost, the study of the reports and the remains that have been conserved does allow for reaching certain conclusions with sufficient certainty.

The literary status of political autobiographies was already well established by the first century BC, a date worth noting. This was a time when the divisions in the social stratum of the Roman leaders, as well as struggles over power, reached their highest point. The apologetic character, the effort of its authors to justify their public deeds, was a key element in the emergence of the autobiographical genre. The first Roman autobiographies appeared during the second century BC, an era in which the turbulence characteristic of the end of the Republic had already begun. As illustrated in one of its most famous examples, Sulla's *Commentarii rerum gestarum*, the authors tend to be the more conflictive personalities and those whose careers had suffered the most from colliding against the established system.[13]

All of these cultural details help to frame with precision Polybius' account of Scipio's *Letter to Philip*. Scipio was an exceptional figure in the political panorama of his era, and he could even be considered the first of the well-known figures whose record signaled the beginning of the Republican crisis. As Scullard has observed, the extraordinary impor-

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[11] Still important with respect to the *commentarii* are the works by F. Bömer, "Der Commentarius. Zur Vorgeschichte und literarischen Form der Schriften Caesars," *Hermes* 81 (1953), 210–250 (for Bömer the equivalency of ὑπόμνηματα and *commentarii* is not exact; see 211); and G. Avenarius, *Lukians Schrift zur Geschichtsschreibung* (Meisenheim am Glan, 1956), 85–104.

[12] Misch, *Autobiography*, 1:216–217; M. von Albrecht, *A History of Roman Literature from Livius Andronicus to Boethius*, 1 (Leiden, 1997), 383–384; D. Flach, *Römische Geschichtsschreibung* (Darmstadt, 1998)[3], 95–97; Scholz, "Sullas *commentarii*," 172–173.

[13] Cf. Lewis, "Imperial Autobiography," 659–660; D. Flach, *Römische Geschichtsschreibung*, 97; Scholz, "Sullas *commentarii*," 188. I could not see the studies of C. Smith ("Sulla's Memoirs"), A. Thein ("Felicitas and the Memoirs of Sulla"), and P. Wiseman ("Augustus, Sulla and the Supernatural"), in the volume *The Lost Memoirs of Augustus and the Development of Roman Autobiography* (C. Smith and Anton Powell, eds. [Swansea, 2009], 65–85, 87–109, and 111–123), published after completion of this chapter.

tance of his public renown posed a threat for the supremacy of the senatorial aristocracy and, in this sense, he heads the list of individuals who ranged from Gracchi to Caesar and included Marius, Sulla, and Pompey. In his political ascent, both rapid and irregular, there was no lack of infractions or innovations to the constitutional order.[14] A legend crystallized around his persona, one which presented Hannibal's conqueror as Fortune's favored son and an individual of exceptional qualities protected and inspired by the gods.[15] It is very possible that, in reality, this legend represented the product of a propagandistic activity promoted by Scipio himself. Echoes of this can be found looking both toward the past, at the Greek precedents, as well as afterwards, at succeeding Roman history.

The ideal of the fortunate man whose decisions enjoy the backing of superior forces reached a wide diffusion in the Hellenistic era. This is testified by the widespread image of the monarch who combines personal qualities with exceptional good fortune.[16] The question that Polybius repeatedly asks in his work—whether the triumph of Rome had been the product of the Romans' luck (*τύχη*) or excellence (*ἀρετή*)—confirms the popularity of the topic.[17] The legend woven around Scipio made use of a theme that resonated in the contemporary panorama of political propaganda. Hence, this legend can be considered the result of a conscious and directed propagandistic effort. This conclusion is reinforced when one considers the images of Roman leaders that circulated in subsequent times. The motif of fortune and divine favor constituted a basic ingredient in the portrait Sulla drew of himself in his *commentarii*.[18] Later on, the conjunction of *fortuna* and *virtus* became a favored theme in the documents of the imperial period when discussing the figure of the emperor

[14] Scullard, *Scipio Africanus*, 24, 27, 81–82, 165–167, 175.

[15] Plb. 10.2–9; Liv. 26.19; App., *Hisp.* 68–72, 49. Regarding the topic in general, see Scullard, *Scipio Africanus*, 18–23. Concerning the propagandistic intention of the arch Scipio had built in front of the Capitolium (Liv. 37.3.7), see J.-M. Engel, *Tite-Live. Histoire romaine. Tome XXVII. Livre XXXVII. Texte établi et traduit par* … (Paris, 1983), 104–105.

[16] Cf. W. Schubart, "Das hellenistisches Königsideal nach Inschriften und Papyri," in *Ideologie und Herrschaft in der Antike*, ed. H. Kloft (Darmstadt, 1979 = *Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete* 12, 1937), 108; L Cerfaux, A. Tondriau, *Un concurrent du christianisme. Le culte des souverains dans la civilisation gréco-romaine* (Louvain, 1956), 169; M.P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion. Zweiter Band. Die hellenistische und römische Zeit* (Munich, 1974) [3], 208–210.

[17] For a clear and precise treatment of this question, see F.W. Walbank, *Polybius* (Berkeley, 1972), 60–65.

[18] H. Behr, *Die Selbstdarstellung Sullas. Ein aristokratischer Politiker zwischen persönlichen Fürungsanspruch und Standessolidarität* (Frankfurt, 1991), 144–171; Scholz, "Sullas *commentarii*," 191–193.

pius, *felix*, *augustus*.[19] Scipio might have been the initiator of this ideological development that culminated in the imperial figure of the prince protected by the gods. If he was not the first, he at least played an important role in the succession of leaders that exploited this image starting from the Hellenistic monarchs down to the Roman emperors.[20]

Now, it is not credible that the *Letter to Philip*, considering the involvement of its author in contemporary propagandistic activities, should be a mere private epistle, fruit of friendship and written to satisfy the curiosity of its recipient, Philip V. The argument that Walbank employs—that is, if the document had circulated Cicero would have known about it—allows for another explanation. Cicero does show great deference to P. Cornelius Scipio, yet he also betrays ignorance of historical literature written in Greek by the first representatives of Latin historiography, an ignorance joined with a low esteem.[21] If Walbank's argument is set aside, everything else invites one to regard the *Letter to Philip* as a work dictated by political propagandistic interests and, therefore, destined for publication. One more piece of information supporting this hypothesis can be derived from its recipient. Philip V of Macedon appears in Polybius' work as a tragic character. Favored with a halo of approval and hope when he took the throne and during the first years of his reign, he soon converted himself into an impious and cruel tyrant whose last years were shadowed, among other things, by the dispute that arose between his two sons.[22] Scipio died in 184/183 and therefore did not witness the events that for Polybius mark the tragic end of Philip's life, which took place during 180/179. However, the first clues of this tragedy had already appeared previously, as shown by the various pitiless acts, betrayals, and atrocities prior to the battle of Cynoscephalae.[23] It is logical to suppose that in creating his dramatic portrayal of the Macedonian monarch, Polybius inspired himself from contemporary sources dealing with this same monarch. According to the opinion of one Greek sector, the changes of allegiance, the rises and

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[19] For a classic treatment of this theme, see M.P. Charlesworth, "Pietas and Victoria. The Emperor and the Citizens," *JRS* 33 (1943), 1, 8; see also A. Alföldi, *Die monarchische Repräsentation im römischen Kaiserreiche* (Darmstadt, 1970), 20 (= *MDAIR* 49 [1934], 50 [1935]), and, more recently, Behr, *Die Sebstdarstellung Sullas*, 191–193.

[20] Cf. Cerfaux-Tondriau, *Un concurrent du christianisme*, 273 ("c'est avec lui [Scipio Africanus Senior] qui commence vraiment en grand l'exploitation de l'ideologie du chef divin"). See also Alföldi, *Die monarchische Repräsentation*, 207.

[21] Cf. M. Fleck, *Cicero als Historiker* (Stuttgart, 1993), 97–109.

[22] See Walbank, "Philippos tragodoumenos: A Polybian Experiment," *JHS* 58 (1938), 55–68.

[23] Walbank, "Philippos tragodoumenos," 63.

falls, the vengeances and the cruelties marked Philip's reputation. These incidents appear to have been collected and even amplified in writings published during the years that preceded Cynoscephalae.[24] His image, therefore, could have represented the individual who suffers the blows of fortune without adequately assimilating the experiences undergone. In this sense, and as a model to not follow, he would have been the ideal recipient of an epistle, such as the *Letter to Philip*, whose author, Publius Cornelius Scipio, also favored by fortune, knew instead how to overcome the vicissitudes of his biography.[25]

Numbers 175–181 of Jacoby's *Fragmente* are dedicated to the Greek historians who wrote about Hannibal and the Second Punic War. Number 180 is dedicated to undetermined authors ("Unbestimmbare"): Hannibal's war, Jacoby affirms, gave rise to a vast literature primarily composed by Greek writers and made up not only of monographs, but also of universal histories.[26] Number 181 is dedicated to Hannibal himself and includes only one text. It is a brief report that proceeds from Nepos (*Hann*. 13.2). This report says that Hannibal is the author of several books in Greek, among which there is a letter directed to the people of Rhodes regarding the campaign of the consul Cn. Manlius Vulso in the south of Anatolia. We have some information concerning this last work. Qualified by Jacoby (1927–1930, 606) as a "political memoir" ("politische Denkschrift"),[27] its topic must have been the plundering carried out by Vulso during his expedition to southern Anatolia in the year 189. At the time of its writing, Hannibal was in the service of Prusias of Bithinia, who between 186 and 183 waged a war against Eumenes of Pergamum.[28] The *Letter to the Rhodians*, then, must have dated only a few years before Hannibal's suicide; the depredations performed by Vulso during his campaign of 189[29] gave rise to anti-Roman propaganda whose main objective was to appeal to the Rhodians who were at odds with

[24] Cf. Walbank, "Alcaeus of Messene, Philip V and Rome," *CQ* 36 (1942), 134–145, 37; (1943), 1–13.

[25] Regarding the importance of adapting the epistle to the personality and life circumstances of the recipient, see the quotes provided by Cugusi, "L'epistolografia: modelli," 383.

[26] Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2B (n. 3), 606.

[27] *FGrHist*, Zweiter Teil B (*Kommentar zu 106–261*), 606.

[28] Cf. C. Habicht, "Über die Kriege zwischen Pergamon und Bithynien," *Hermes* 84 (1956), 90–100; É. Will, *Histoire politique du monde hellénistique (323–330 av. J.-C.)* (Nancy, 1979–1982[2]), 2: 286–290; K. Christ, *Hannibal* (Darmstadt, 2003), 150.

[29] For information concerning Vulso's campaign, see Plb. 21.33.40; Liv. 38.12.17; App., *Syr*. 42; and Zon. 9.20. Vulso's triumphal celebration of this campaign reached fame

Eumenes, a Roman protégé in those years. Nothing invites one to suppose that this was an autobiographical composition.

With respect to the books written in Greek that Nepos attributes to Hannibal, we know nothing. The report fits with the vision of Hannibal as a Hellenized figure, as frequently defended in modern bibliography. It also fits with information concerning the Greek figures that moved in Hannibal's entourage.[30] It also fits, generally, with the diffusion that the Greek language seemed to have had among Carthage's upper classes, where there might even have existed literary circles that used this language.[31] However, no hint whatsoever exists that these books had an autobiographical orientation. On the other hand, an autobiographical character has been attributed to yet another document produced by Hannibal. Polybius affirms having seen a bronze inscription in Lacinium that the Carthaginian general had engraved during his stay in Italy. Lacinium, now Capo Colonne, on the southern coast of Italy, was the site of the Hera Lacinia temple, where, according to Livy, the inscription was set.[32] It must date from the summer of 205.[33] Thanks to Livy, we know that it was written in Greek and in Punic.[34] With respect to the content of the inscription, the only information we can deduce from Polybius is that it contained the number and origin of Hannibal's army. Livy qualifies it as an extensive inscription that recorded the Punic leader's achievements (*ingenti rerum ab se gestarum titulo*). Based on these particulars, it has been characterized as a historiographic document whose careful precision reflects the features of Hannibal's Greek training and of the Greek cultural milieu in which he moved.[35] With the Lacinium inscription, Hannibal attempted to leave a trace of his personal accomplishments, an effort that likens him to other military figures in the Hellenistic world.[36]

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in subsequent literature as the moment that marked the first introduction in Rome of *luxuria*, that is, the Greek τρυφή: see G. Zecchini, "Cn. Manlio Vulsone e l'inizio della corruzione a Roma," *CISA* 8 (Milan, 1982), 159–178.

[30] On both points, see the information and references provided by K. Christ, *Hannibal*, 49, 176–181, 188.

[31] K. Vössing, "Cartagine," in *Lo spazio letterario della Grecia antica*, eds. G. Cambiano, L. Canfora, D. Lanza, 1 (Rome, 1993), 772–774.

[32] Plb. 3.33.18, 3.56.4, 34.11.9; Liv. 28.46.16.

[33] Walbank, *A Historical Commentary*, 1:364.

[34] About the possibility that the inscription consisted of scarce lines in Punic together with a much longer and more detailed Greek text, see C. Baurain, "La place des littératures grecque et punique dans les bibliothéques de Carthage," *AC* 61 (1992), 166–167.

[35] Misch, *Autobiography*, 209.

[36] Christ, *Hannibal*, 186.

Publius Cornelius Scipio Nasica Corculum was one of the most accomplished Roman politicians of his time. Consul in 162 and in 155, censor in 159, *princeps senatus* in 147 and 152, *pontifex maximus* in 150 (he had already been a pontifex some time before), he was married to Cornelia, daughter of Scipio Africanus and was, therefore, also the adoptive uncle of Scipio Aemilianus.[37] His intellectual prowess, his eloquence, and his knowledge of law are eulogized by the ancient sources.[38] However, we only have one testimony of his literary work, offered by Plutarch in the *Life of Paulus Aemilius*. Various passages of this biography speak of Nasica, to whom they attribute a composition about the battle of Pydna qualified as *ἐπιστόλιον πρός τινα τῶν βασιλέων*.[39] It is supposed to be a brief letter directed to a king that is unspecified by the biographer.[40] This lack of specificity in the citation seems to corroborate the supposition that Plutarch knew Nasica's work indirectly, via an intermediary, perhaps Juba of Mauritania.[41] In any case, it is sure that the report of the battle of Pydna present in the *Life of Paulus Aemilius* owes much to Nasica. Although the main source of this biography is Polybius, on several occasions Nasica's version opposes that of Polybius. In fact, at some points Nasica's version predominates, since it is the origin of certain details that Plutarch provides in his biography. It is known that, generally, Plutarch did not blindly follow only one source.[42] In the *Life of Paulus Aemilius*, or at least in the section dedicated to the battle of Pydna, it is plausible that the biographer had the Polybian text in front of him, which he would have read first. The second step would have been to verify the account of

[37] Regarding his political career, see Broughton, *MRR*, 2:556 and 3:72. For his biography, consult F. Münzer, "Cornelius" (350), *RE* 4.1 (1900), 1494–1497.

[38] Cic., *Cato* 50; *Brut*. 79; more references in Münzer, "Cornelius," 1501.

[39] The passages (Plut., *Aem*. 15.1–8, 16.1–4, 17.11–13, 18.1–9, 21.7) have been collected by Jacoby in three fragments located under no. 233 of his *FGrHist* (= Peter, *HRR*, fr. 1 and 2, 1:47–48).

[40] The king has been identified with Masinissa (W. Soltau, "P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica als Quelle Plutarchs," *Hermes*, 21 [1896], 155; Münzer, "Cornelius," 1498), identification based on the ties that this king maintained with the house of the Scipios.

[41] Soltau, "P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica," 158.

[42] Many studies have highlighted the complexity of Plutarch's method for extracting material for his biographies; see, for example, C.B.R. Pelling, "Plutarch's adaptation of his source material," *JHS* 100 (1980), 127–140; A.B. Bosworth, "History and Artifice in Plutach's *Eumenes*," in *Plutarch and the Historical Tradition*, ed. P.A. Stadter (London, 1992), 56–89; L. Piccirilli, "Biografia e storia: il metodo di Plutarco," *SIFC* 91 (1998), 39–60.

this primary source by consulting a secondary source.[43] In this case, it would have been Nasica's version, not in its original form, but, rather, via an intermediary.

The *epistolion* cited by Plutarch is typically considered one of the first Roman autobiographies.[44] Moreover, Scipio Nasica Corculum had an agitated political life that did not lack controversies. He is said to have opposed Cato's policy toward Carthage, and his opposition to the destruction of this state gave rise to a famous dispute. In the ensuing debates, arguments were presented that resonated with force then and would continue to do so later as well: the need for the constant fear of a foreign power in order to safeguard Rome's military qualities, the importance of this source of fear in the maintenance of Roman civil and political order, or the imperative to give a fair deal to the peoples conquered, an imperative that was favored by the aforementioned fear.[45] His figure, therefore, embodies the qualities of a politically restless character immersed in contemporary disputes. All of these attributes make him an ideal candidate for the kind of apologetic autobiographies that were born in the second century. The formula Plutarch uses to introduce his work[46] leads one to believe that it might be a brief composition focused on the battle of Pydna. At that time (in 168) Nasica Corculum was military tribune,[47] and neither his position nor his previous experience would have given him the authority necessary to have written one of the *commentarii* composed by high-ranking magistrates that defended the public career and political options of its author. Accordingly, Corculum's *epistolion* contained a reduced account that included autobiographical

[43] Regarding the sources for this biography, see R. Flacelière and É. Chambry, *Plutarque, Vies. Tome IV. Timoléon-Paul Émile, Pélopidas-Marcellus, Texte établi et traduit par* … (Paris, 1966), 60–65.

[44] Cf. Scholz, "Sullas *commentarii*," 174. Bömer ("Der Commentarius," 226) considers it a first exemplar of literary *commentarii*. For Albrecht (*History*, 384) and W. Suerbaum ("Autobiographie und Epistolographie," in *Handbuch der lateinischen Literatur der Antike. Erster Band. Die archaishe Literatur von den Anfängen bis Sullas Tod*, ed. W. Suerbaum [Munich, 2002], 438) it is a semi-literary precedent of autobiography.

[45] Concerning this topic, consult M. Gelzer, "Nasicas Widerspruch gegen die Zerstörung Karthagos," *Philologus* 86 (1931); W. Hoffmann, "Die römische Politik des 2. Jahrhundert und das Ende Karthagos," *Historia* 9 (1960); A.E. Astin, *Scipio Aemilianus* (Oxford, 1967), 276–280.

[46] Plut., *Aem*. 15.5: γεγραφὼς περὶ τῶν πράξεων τούτων [the battle of Pidna] ἐπιστόλιον πρός τινα τῶν βασιλέων.

[47] Broughton, *MRR*, 1:449.

elements but that was limited to the events surrounding the downfall of Perseus of Macedon in Pydna.[48]

In relation to the contents, the most significant information that Plutarch provides is the following: before the battle, when the Roman and Macedonian armies were already camped near each other, Nasica volunteered himself to the consul Paulus Aemilius to conduct an intricate maneuver that was to take place on a difficult route. After the consul accepted, Nasica took the path that lead to the sea, as if his intention were to embark his troops and sail to a location behind the enemy. However, upon nightfall, he revealed the real destination to his officials, took an opposite route, and reached the village of Pythion, where he let his men rest (*Aem*. 15.1–8). When Perseus discovered the maneuver, he was beset with worry and sent two thousand Macedonians to occupy the narrow pass. Nasica's troops fell upon them while, according to Polybius, they were sleeping. However, Nasica recorded that an energetic battle had taken place, that he himself had knocked down a Thracian mercenary, that the enemy had shamefully fled and that the Roman troops had pursued them. The defeat of his troops frightened Perseus, who hastily removed his camp (*Aem*.16.1–4). Later, the battle of Pydna began with a skirmish. Nasica, who rode his horse to the place of the fighting, could see how the entire Macedonian army launched itself in the battle (*Aem*.18.1–9). As for the final result, according to Nasica, Roman losses in Pydna were eighty men (*Aem*. 21.7). A passage from the Plutarchan biography that is not included by Jacoby among the *Fragmente* also possibly derives from the *epistolion*.[49] According to this passage, Perseus trusted Nasica the most, but since Nasica was absent he had to surrender himself to Cnaeus.[50]

The dominant tone, as one can see, was one of self-celebration. This corresponds with the apologetic purpose that seems to constitute the most characteristic trait of the first Roman autobiographies. It is remarkable that only one report has been conserved about this work, offered by Plutarch. This circumstance has been explained in terms similar to those used in the case of the *Letter to Philip* by Scipio Africanus: Nasica's *epistolion* was deposited in the Scipios' archive where some author consulted

[48] Cf. Peter, *HRR*, 1:CXIX–CXX; Lewis, "Imperial Autobiography," 634–635; Albrecht, *History*, 384; Scholz, "Sullas *commentarii*," 174.

[49] Cf. Jacoby, *FGrHist* 2B (n. 3), 657; Flacelière and Chambry, *Plutarque, Vies. Tome IV. Timoléon-Paul Émile*, 64.

[50] *Aem*. 26.7. Cnaeus is Cnaeus Octavius, praetor in charge of the fleet: cf. Broughton, *MRR*, 1:428.

it, and from this author Plutarch received news of the work. Polybius, for his part, knew of Nasica's composition, but, due to its encomiastic tendency, did not value it and therefore avoided any mention of the *epistolion*.[51] As so often occurs in the field of fragmentary historiography, it is difficult—or impossible—to verify the exactitude or falsity of the hypothesis mentioned. Generally, it can be supposed that various factors contributed to the demise of Roman autobiography—and historiography—of the first period. One of these factors is of a literary nature. The first Roman historians wrote under the imprint of Hellenistic models, an omnipresent imprint in all spheres during the initial phase of Roman literature.[52] The literary period that begins with the era of Augustus, dominated by the principles of classicism, rejects the aesthetic models of the Hellenistic world. This explains, at least in part, why all the production composed under this influence, including autobiographies, was hardly appreciated and almost unknown.[53] In the concrete case of the first Roman autobiographies, a second reason can be added. Due to their orientation and their propagandistic intentions referring to a particular trajectory or event, these works were very much tied to the political horizon of the moment in which they were composed. Therefore, they had an ephemeral and circumstantial character that hardly favored their relevance and diffusion at later dates, when the points of dominant interest in public opinion, logically, had changed.

On the subject of the literary activity of Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus, the famous tribune of the plebs in the year 133, defender of the *lex agraria*, we hardly know anything. We have more information regarding his brother Gaius Sempronius Gracchus, considered the greatest Latin orator before Cicero.[54] Nonetheless, only two fragments of his alleged autobiography have reached us. The first, transmitted by Cicero, recounts an anecdote whose main character is Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus, father of both Gracchi brothers. G. Gracchus left written (*scriptum reliquit*) that his father saw two serpents in his house. Then he consulted the *haruspices*, and, in keeping with their recommendation, killed the male serpent but allowed the female one to escape, which guaranteed the life

[51] Peter, *HRR*, 1:CXX.

[52] Cf. Albrecht, *History*, 362–364.

[53] The key points on this issue were already addressed by U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, "Asianismus und Atticismus," *Hermes* 35 (1900), 1–52.

[54] See the study dedicated to this topic by M. von Albrecht, *Meister römischer Prosa von Cato bis Apuleius* (Heidelberg, 1971), 51–74.

of his wife but supposed his own death.[55] The second, proceeding from Plutarch, recounts that, according to what Gaius Gracchus reported in a certain composition (ἔν τινι βιβλίῳ ἔγραψε), his brother Tiberius conceived his political projects while passing by the fields of Etruria and observing the conditions in which they were cultivated.[56] The anecdote about the two serpents is repeated in two other passages proceeding also from Cicero (*Div*. 2.62) and Plutarch (*T. G*. 14–15), and Cicero reports that it was included in something written from G. Gracchus to M. Pomponius. Now, Plutarch knew the literary work of G. Gracchus, as shown by certain passages from Plutarch himself.[57] Pomponius was, in addition, an intimate friend and one of the most loyal collaborators of G. Gracchus.[58] Based on these data, the following conclusions have been reached: (1) fragments 1 (Cic., *Div*.1.36) and 2 (Plut., *T. G*. 8.9) of Peter come from a single source; (2) this source was a text *ad Pomponium* of which Cicero speaks in *Div*. 2.62.3. This text evidently regarded the two Tiberii, father and brother of the composer, but it also contained enough autobiographical elements to appear in the lists of the first Roman autobiographies.[59] If the first two conclusions appear logical and probable, the third is much more dubious. Peter had already expressed doubts with respect to this conjecture, doubts that even affect the historical character of the writing directed to Pomponius.[60] It is reasonable to conclude that the hypothesis regarding the autobiographical character of the *liber ad Pomponium* by G. Gracchus is gratuitous. Hence, its inclusion among Roman autobiographies is questionable.[61]

The work of M. Aemilius Scaurus can be considered a fully developed realization of Roman autobiographical literature. According to fragments 1–6 (Peter), this composition was entitled *De vita sua* and consisted of

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[55] Cic., *Div*.1.36 = Peter, *HRR*, fr. 1, 1:119.

[56] Plut., *T.G*. 8.9 = Peter, *HRR*, fr. 2, 1:119.

[57] In addition to the passage cited (*T. G*. 8.9), see *C. G*. 4.6.

[58] He was among the friends who seized the dagger from G. Gracchus with which he tried to commit suicide. He was also one of the friends who hindered with his death the persecution unleashed when Gaius escaped: see Plut., *C. G*. 16.6 and 17.1. More information about Pomponius is offered by Velleius Paterculus, Valerius Maximus, and the *de viris illustribus* of Ps.-Aurelius and Victor: cf. Peter, *HRR*, 1:CLXXIX–CLXXX.

[59] The genesis of this assumption is expounded by Peter, *HRR*, 1:CXXIX. It was later defended by M. Schanz and C. Hosius (*Geschichte der römischen Literatur*, 1 [Munich, 1927]^{4}, 204), Misch (*Autobiography*, 242–243), and Albrecht (*History*, 383). More cautious are Lewis ("Imperial Autobiography," 660) and Scholz ("Sullas *commentarii*," 175).

[60] Peter, *HRR*, 1:CLXXX: *neque tamen iusto iure C. Gracchum locum suum inter hos historicos obtinere perseuerauerim*.

[61] Cf. Bömer, "Der Commentarius," 227.

three books. Scaurus' life was made up of all the traits to be hoped for in an illustrious man called to do this kind of writing. Born in 163/162, he came from a patrician but impoverished family. The lack of resources seems to have marked the beginnings of his public career, during which time he had to make the efforts fitting to a *homo novus*.[62] His situation improved considerably when he married Caecilia Metella, the daughter of Caecilius Metellus, consul in 119. In any case, Scaurus, who had had difficult beginnings, managed to occupy the highest posts: consul in 115, censor in 109, *princeps senatus*, *pontifex* (or *augur*). Cicero was able to affirm that he had renewed his lineage's feeble reputation and that the world now moved according to his orders.[63] A man with such a notable public trajectory could not escape the upheavals and enflamed disputes that agitated Roman political life in that era. Accusations, criticisms and conflicts had surrounded Scaurus during his lifetime. Indeed, the debate regarding his behavior has continued up to modern historiography. His autobiography must have been, in some way, a response to the controversy unleashed around his public career. When judging his writing, therefore, it is important to consider the elements that framed the vehement polemic around him, a polemic that is at times difficult to reconstruct due to the contradictions and inconsistencies that are found in the sources.[64]

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[62] *Vir. ill.* 72.3 (referring to his performance as town councilor as *aedilis* in 122: Broughton, *MRR*, 1:517, 519): *iuris reddendo magis quam muneri edendo studuit*. Cf. Ascon. *Scaur.* p. 23 lines 5–9 (Clark). Regarding this point, consult Peter, *HRR*, 1:CCXLVII; M. Chassignet, *L'annalistique romaine. Tome III. L'annalistique récente. L'autobiographie politique. Texte établi et traduit par …* (Paris, 2004), LXXXVIII.

[63] Cic., *Mur.* 16: *memoriam prope intermortuam generis*; *Font.* 24: *cuius iniurati nutu prope terrarum orbis regebatur*. Scaurus descended from M. Aemilius Barbula, consul in 239, but after whom no one in the family held a political post for the next three generations. The texts that inform us about the life of Scaurus already appear in E. Klebs, "Aemilius" (140), *RE I* 1 (1893), 584–588. See also G. Flammini, "Marco Emilio Scauro e i suoi frammenti," *AFLM* 10 (1977), 37–47.

[64] The sources that inform us about Scaurus may be contaminated by approaches that are hostile or favorable to him. It is equally possible that personal factors had intervened in this originally political controversy: see Flammini, "Marco Emilio Scauro," 42–47. In addition, for reasons concerning the transmission, our information about Scaurus could have already been distorted in antiquity, a distortion that especially affected *De viris illustibus* by Ps.-Aurelius Victor: with respect to this matter, see Lewis, "Imperial Autobiography," 660. The positions taken by ancient authors can be summarized in the antithetical judgments formulated by Sallustius (*Iug.*15.4 … *homo nobilis, impiger, factiosus, avidus potentiae, honoris, divitiarum, ceterum vitia sua callide occultans*) and Cicero (*Sest.* 101 … *a Graccho usque ad Q. Varium seditiosis omnibus restitit, quem unquam ulla vis, ullae minae, ulla invidia labefacit*).

One of the most notorious scandals was provoked by events related to the war against Jugurtha. L. Calpurnius Bestia, consul in the year 111, had reached an agreement in an attempt to avoid the war decreed by Rome against the African leader. The suspicion was hence raised that Bestia had been bribed by Jugurtha, and C. Mamilius promoted and obtained the creation of a special tribunal (*quaestio*) to investigate the matter. Scaurus participated in two commissions sent by Rome to Africa in 112 and 111.[65] In the second of these, he was Bestia's legate, in whose defense he also intervened in the *quaestio Mamiliana*. Sallust affirms (*Iug.* 29.2–5) that Scaurus allowed himself to be bribed by Jugurtha. Nonetheless, it seems strange that, according to Sallust himself (*Iug.* 40.4), Scaurus appears to have been a chosen member of the tribunal promoted by Mamilius. The solutions that have been given in response range from believing that Scaurus was indeed guilty of corruption but cunning in the handling of political intrigue (and so was exonerated) to asseverating his innocence, in which case the accusation was a falsehood devised by his political rivals.[66]

His supposed implication in Jugurtha's bribery was only one of the many disputes that Scaurus had to face. According to the interpretation that has been made of certain pieces of information,[67] he was legate in Asia at an unsure date, a circumstance that gave rise to the accusation of betrayal for accepting money from king Mithridates. However, this appears to be an inaccurate accusation, and the hypothesis has even been introduced that Scaurus never set foot in Asia nor carried out the aforementioned *legatio*. On the other hand, the charge of having accepted a bribe from Mithridates was made against him (regardless of its truth or falsehood) in the heat of a political climate that was easily receptive to such allegations.[68] A new trial, this time for treachery, brought him to the tribunals in the year 90, when the tribune of the plebs Q. Varius Hybrida promoted the *lex Varia*. The law, born in the context of the so-called "Social War," was directed against those who were in part responsible

[65] Broughton, *MRR*, 1:539, 541.

[66] See Klebs, "Aemilius," 585 for the first solution; Flammini, "Marco Emilio Scauro," 46–48 for the second. The uncertainties about the chronology create even more complication in the matter. Regarding these doubts and for other hypotheses on the subject of Scaurus' supposed corruption see Broughton, *MRR*, 3:10.

[67] Cf. Ascon., *Scaur.* p. 21, lines 18–20 (Clark); Val. Max. 3.7.8. (*quod ab rege Mithridate ob rem publicam prodendam pecuniam accepisset*).

[68] Cf. Klebs, "Aemilius," 585–586; M.C. Alexander, "The *legatio Asiatica* of Scaurus: Did it take place?," *TAPhA* 11 (1981), 1–9; Broughton, *MRR*, 3:11.

for the uprising of the allies against Rome. Nevertheless, the *lex Varia* in itself raises many problems, and in the aforementioned trial it is easy to see how Scaurus' old enemies intervened, thereby making it necessary to consider the influence of political rivalry here as well.[69] Scaurus also filled a sacerdotal office, and the disputes are present here as well. The accuser was at that time the tribune of 104 (and consul in 96) Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus, and the motive was the *lex Domitia* of that same year, which transferred to a popular assembly the choice among the selected candidates for the four great sacerdotal *collegia*. There is no certitude, however, as to what the real substance of the accusation was, and is it not known with certainty if the office that Scaurus filled was that of *augur* or of *pontifex*.[70]

While he was consul Scaurus fought against various populations settled in the Western Alps, a campaign that, despite being ridiculed by his enemies, gave him a triumph.[71] With respect to the legislative work he produced as consul, we have news of two laws. The first is a sumptuary law that dictated specific restrictions on food.[72] The second, *de libertinorum suffragiis*, concerned freedmen's right to vote, upon which were probably imposed certain restrictions (the specific contents of the law are unknown).[73] His performance as censor was famous for the great works that he accomplished.[74] During the crisis of the year 100, he vehemently opposed Saturninus. Cicero informs us that he appeared armed in the *forum*, walking with difficulty since he was more than seventy years old.[75] He must have died around 90, since his wife, Caecilia Metella, was married a second time to Sulla in the year 87.[76]

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[69] See Peter, *HRR*, 1:CCL; Klebs, "Aemilius," 586; R. Seager, "Lex Varia de Maiestate," *Historia* 16 (1967), 38–39, 42–43; D. Cloud, "The Constitution and Public Law," *CAH* 9 (1994^2), 518–519 ("The lex Varia is also a puzzle").

[70] Apropos the accusation against Scaurus and the office that he filled, see R.M. Geer, "M. Aemilius Scaurus (Suetonius *Nero* ii. 1 and Asconius on Cicero *Pro Scauro* 1)," *CPh* 24 (1929), 292–294; as well as Broughton, *MRR*, 3:11–12 and the bibliography cited there. On the subject of the *lex Domitia* see M. Beard, "Religion," *CAH* 9 (1994^2), 746.

[71] See references in Flammini, "Marco Emilio Scauro," 40–41.

[72] See references in Peter, *HRR*, CCXLVIII and Flammini, "Marco Emilio Scauro," 40.

[73] Cf. P. Grimal. *Cicéron. Discourses. Pour Cn. Plancius. Pour M. Aemilius Scaurus. Texte établi et traduit par …* (Paris, 1976), 151–152; Flammini, "Marco Emilio Scauro," 30. Scaurus' hostility toward the freedmen seems confirmed by Cicero, *De orat*. 2.257.

[74] The construction of the *Via Aemilia Scauri* (see G. Radke, "Viae Publicae Romanae," *RE*, Suppl. 13 (1973), 1616, as well as the observations of P. Grimal, *Cicéron. Discourses*, 154) and the restoration of the *Pons Mulvius* (cf. Broughton, *MRR*, 1:561, 562).

[75] Cic., *Rab. perd*. 21, 26. *Cf.* Val. Max. 3.2.18.

[76] Plut., *Sull*. 6.10: cf. Klebs, "Aemilius," 587.

Scaurus' life, as can be observed, took place in an extremely politicized atmosphere in which confrontations were a constant ingredient. Such circumstances reappear with the other representatives of the first Roman autobiographies, and the participation of the author in the current battles provides the context for these first manifestations of the genre. Several clues give us a clear idea apropos Scaurus' position, and the verdict of modern studies is unanimous: he was a significant representative of the aristocracy, although his attitude of moderation was distant from the patent extremism that existed in certain sectors of aristocratic conservatism.[77] The halo that surrounds his figure in later literary tradition is not out of place with either his public career or his political and social affinities. Authority, experience, wisdom in administration of public matters, severity, and distinction are prominent traits in the favorable depiction that Cicero makes of Scaurus. They were qualities that above all emanated from the force and imposing presence that his personality transmitted.[78] As an orator the reports that we have, which mainly come from Cicero,[79] show these same characteristics: his extreme seriousness and *auctoritas* made it so that when he spoke in defense of the accused he did not seem to be litigating, but rather giving a deposition. He possessed a capacity to instill certainty that originated from his personality, not his knowledge.[80] In two brief citations Charisius informs us that Scaurus, accused of dishonestly pocketing money, threw at his accuser the insult of *uulturius*, an archaic term for "vulture."[81] Another oratorical fragment transmits the response that he gave in his defense in the year 90 to the tribune of the Plebs Q. Varius Hybrida, a response that highlighted his rank as *princeps senatus*.[82] Bardon passionately praises the literary craft of this last text, in which nobility and elevation stand out, as well as the apparent simplicity of the form, the masterly use of tools such as the *asyndeton*, the opposition of proper names, and the alliteration.[83]

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[77] Cf. Grimal, *Cicéron. Discours*, 155; Flammini, "Marco Emilio Scauro," 47.

[78] Cic., *De orat*. 1.214–215; see also *Brut*. 112.

[79] Of the thirteen texts that appear as fragments from Scaurus in Malcovati's edition (*ORF* 43, 1:162–167), five, the most extensive and rich in contents come directly from Cicero.

[80] Cic., *Brut*. 11–112.

[81] Malcovati, fr. 9, *ORF* 43, 1:167 (*nefarius vulturius, patriae parricidae*) and fr. 10.167 (*uulturius rei publicae*).

[82] Malcovati, fr. 11, *ORF* 43, 1:167: *Q. Varius Hispanus M. Scaurum principem senatus socios in arma ait convocasse; M. Scaurus princeps senatus negat; testis nemo est: utri vos, Quirites, convenit credere?*.

[83] H. Bardon, *La littérature latine inconnue, Tome I. L'époque républicaine* (Paris, 1952),

The distinctive qualities of Scaurus the orator reappear in the reports that allude to his autobiography. Its title, as confirmed by six fragments, was *De vita sua*;[84] one of them also indicated that it consisted of three books, information repeated by Cicero.[85] The same passage of Cicero affirms that the work was dedicated to a certain L. Fufidius, a figure difficult to identify.[86] Both Peter's edition and that of Chassignet contain only six fragments from Scaurus' autobiography, which in addition are quite concise and offer scant information. Bardon observes that some (fragments 3, 4, and 5) show evidence of a preference for archaic expressions, from which we can conclude that Scaurus' archaism was probably not exclusively linguistic: the preference for forms that recalled ancient times reveals a man who purported to resuscitate the austere virtues of primitive Rome.[87] The comment fits with other information referring to Scaurus' personal disposition and literary profile. Fragment number seven of *De vita sua* seems to speak of the strict discipline with which he directed his troops;[88] number one indicates that the work treated the theme of the difficulties Scaurus encountered at the beginning of his political career, an indication that should be completed with other reports that allude to the effort the author and main character had to make in those initial years;[89] and a passage from *De viris illustribus* records the response that vindicated his consular dignity in the face of the praetor P. Decius, who did not stand when he walked by.[90]

In the case of Scaurus, everything indicates that the values projected by his public figure—severity, morality, political archaism, rigor, grandeur, and a sense of dignity—reappeared and were reflected in his literary production. The intromission, the even invasive presence of the author's personality, constitutes a significant characteristic of the first Roman autobiographies. This is predictable in view of the apologetic character of such production. The element of "carismatica ostentazione" (in the

95. It must be said that Cicero's opinion about Scaurus is less admiring than Bardon's; see *Brut*. 110, 116.

[84] Peter, *HRR*, fr. 1–6, 1:185; Chassignet, *L'annalistique romaine*, frs. 1–6, 161–162.

[85] Peter, *HRR*, fr. 1, 1:185; Chasignet, *L'annalistique romaine*, fr. 1, 161 (= Val. Max. 4.4.11); Cic., *Brut*. 112; see also *Brut*. 132 and Plin., *Nat. His*. 33.21.

[86] Cf. Lewis, "Imperial Autobiography," 662; Chassignet, *L'annalistique romaine*, XCI.

[87] Bardon, *La littérature latine inconnue*, 109–110.

[88] Frontin, *Strat*. 4.3.13; see M. Chassignet, "La naissance de l'autobiographie à Rome: *laus sui* ou *apologia de vita sua?*," *REL* 81 (2003), 73.

[89] Ascon., *Scaur*. p. 23, lines 5–8 (Clark); *Vir. ill*. 72.1.

[90] *Vir. ill*. 72.6. For a political contextualization of the episode, see E. Badian, "P. Decius P. f. Subolus. An Orator of the Time of the Gracchi," *JRS* 46 (1956), 94–95.

words of Flammini) latent in such an approach must have been highly developed in Scaurus' *De vita sua*.[91] It is quite probable that the work included, in accordance with a procedure already practiced by Cato, extracts of the author's discourses.[92] Scaurus' autobiography had a poor literary fortune, since Cicero (*Brut.* 112) comments that in his time nobody read it. Notwithstanding, Scaurus is a well-known figure to Valerius Maximus, Asconius, Quintilian and Ps.-Aurelius Victor. It has been thought that all of these authors read and used *De vita sua*, to the point that certain texts that they produced must be considered fragments from Scaurus.[93]

The birth of P. Rutilius Rufus is to be situated around the year 154. All that is known of his biography, including his post as consul in 105, suggests this date.[94] His public career, full and eventful, was marked by his connections with important figures from contemporary Roman politics and literature. Among such people were the orator Sulpicius Galba,[95] the jurist P. Mucius Scaevola,[96] and C. Laelius, the intimate collaborator of Scipio Aemilianus.[97] According to Cicero,[98] he also heard lectures from the philosopher Panaetius of Rhodes. This last piece of information, together with the aforementioned connections, has been used to support the argument that Rutilius Rufus was a member of the so-called "Scipionic Circle," that is, the group of philhellenic *litterati* that gathered around Scipio Aemilianus.[99] The first fact that we have informing us of his public career indicates that in 134 he was *tribunus militum* under the orders of Scipio Aemilianus, in the army that fought in the Numantine War.[100] Afterwards, he unsuccessfully applied for the post of tribune of the plebs, in a maneuver that was possibly directed against

[91] Tac., *Agr.* 1; cf. Peter, *HRR*, 1:CCXLVI–CCXLVII; Flammini, "Marco Emilio Scauro," 49; Chassignet, "La naissance de l'autobiographie," 73.

[92] In connection with this point see the bibliographic data offered by Chassignet, *L'annalistique romaine*, XCIII.

[93] Regarding this hypothesis, consult the indications offered by Chassignet, *L'annalistique romaine*, XCII.

[94] Cf. F. Münzer, "Rutilius" (34), *RE I* A 1 (1914), 1270.

[95] Cic., *Brut.* 85–89, *De orat.* 227–228.

[96] Cic., *Off.* 2.47.

[97] Cic., *Brut.* 86, *Lael.*101.

[98] *Brut.* 114, *Off.* 3.10.

[99] Cf. Peter, *HRR*, 1:CCLVIII; Münzer, "Rutilius," 1270; Bardon, *La littérature latine inconnue*, 110; Suerbaum, "Autobiographie und Epistolographie," 443. Concerning the political connection between Scipio Aemilianus and Rutilius Rufus, see Astin, *Scipio Aemilianus*, 84, 88–89.

[100] Cic., *Rep.* 1.17; App., *Hisp.* 382.

G. Gracchus.[101] Praetor in 118,[102] he introduced an edict that reduced the formal obligations (*operae*) of freedmen to patrons.[103] In 116 he aspired to join the consulate but lost against the candidature of Aemilius Scaurus; as a result, he brought Aemilius to the tribunals, who in turn responded by accusing Rutilius.[104] Between 109 and 107 he fought against Jugurtha in Africa as a legate of Q. Caecilius Metellus.[105] He finally joined the consulate in 105. His colleague Cn. Mallius Maximus, in charge of the army that fought against the Cimbri in Gaul, was defeated, and Rutilius had to recruit a new army and adopt a series of measures for the military protection of Rome.[106] In the crisis of the year 100, he aligned himself on the side of the *optimates* with men such as Aemilius Scaurus and Lutatius Catulus.[107]

Rutilius Rufus' active political career brusquely ended with an episode that decisively marked both his biography and his literary profile. In the year 94, he accompanied Q. Mucius Scaevola, proconsul in Asia,[108] as a legate. Both—proconsul and legate—energetically defended the provincials confronted with the abuses of the Roman *publicani*. When the proconsul left, Rutilius remained in Asia as his representative. A few years later, in 92,[109] he was put on trial under the accusation of having accepted bribes. Condemned to paying a sum of money so high that he was unable to pay it, he exiled himself and never returned. He spent the rest of his life in exile, from whence he wrote his biography and his *History of Rome*.

Cicero notes that Rutilius' trial and unjust sentence made the very foundations of the state tremble.[110] Ancient tradition supports Cicero's

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[101] Cic., *Planc*. 52; on the subject of the political sense of this candidature, see Münzer, "Rutilius," 1271.

[102] The date is doubtful: see Broughton, *MRR*, 1:527.

[103] Apropos the context that surrounded the edict, see Purcell, "The City of Rome and the *plebs urbana* in the late Republic," *CAH* 9 (1994^2), 662–663. For more information on Rutilius Rufus' legislative activity, see Münzer, "Rutilius," 1270 and W. Kierdorf, "R. Rufus, P." (13), *DNP*, 10 (2001), 1170.

[104] Cic., *De orat*. 2.280; *Brut*. 113.

[105] Sall., *Iug*. 50.1, 52.5: cf. Broughton, *MRR*, 1:547, 549, 552.

[106] Frontin., *Strat*. 4.1.12; Val. Max. 2.3.2.

[107] Cic., *Rab. perd*. 21.

[108] Münzer, "Rutilius," 1273–1274, situates Scaevola's mission in Asia in 94; nonetheless, Peter, *HRR*, 1:CCLIV, dates it in 98, a date accepted by other scholars; see the references offered by R. Kallet-Marx, "The Trial of Rutilius Rufus," *Phoenix* 44 (1990), 128; Suerbaum, "Autobiographie und Epistolographie," 445.

[109] Or perhaps at a somewhat prior date; see Kallet-Marx, "The Trial of Rutilius Rufus," 126–127.

[110] Cic., *Brut*. 115: *quo iudicio convulsam penitus scimus esse rem publicam*.

claim. Numerous sources exist that mention and lament this episode,[111] to the point that it has been affirmed that Rutilius' trial is perhaps the most famous trial in Roman political history.[112] Based on indications offered by the sources, modern studies have tended to present Rutilius' sentence as one more chapter in the struggle between *optimates* and *equites*. Confronted with a jury composed of *equites* (in accordance with legislation enacted by Gaius Gracchus), Rutilius was the victim of an unjust and illegal trial.[113] However, if one stops to examine the case with more care, a more complex panorama emerges. Already Peter and Münzer[114] warn that, in spite of the multiple allusions and comments of the ancient authors, we only know of a few details regarding the actual lawsuit. Faced with an accusation that, as was usual at the time, added to the charge of extortion that of rape and indecorous practices,[115] his defense, according to the sources, was austere, contained, and presented in a manner corresponding to the "Socratic" model. According to Cicero, he refused to appear before the judges as imploring and did not allow his lawyers to indulge in oratorical adornments or liberties.[116] It is possible to attribute Rutilius' attitude to his personal convictions and his disdain for emotional and theatrical oratory as contrary to the austerity he deemed fitting to the philosopher. Cicero reports that Rutilius affirmed that he preferred death or exile to using such oratorical style.[117] However, other viewpoints also are possible. Cicero recounts how Rutilius could have had as defenders two of the most prestigious orators of his era, L. Crassus and M. Antonius, both consuls and, in principle, integrated within the group of the *optimates*. Instead, he defended himself, his nephew C. Cotta—a young orator—added a few words, and Q. Mucius Scaevola had a measured intervention; all in all it lacked the abundance and power

[111] See the lists provided by Münzer, "Rutilius," 1275; Broughton, *MRR*, 2:8.

[112] Kallet-Marx, "The Trial of Rutilius Rufus," 123.

[113] See the references offered by Kallet-Marx, "The Trial of Rutilius Rufus," 120; include A. Lintott, "Political History, 146–195 BC," *CAH* 9 (1994^2), 103; K. Christ, *Krise und Untergang der Römischen Republik* (Darmstadt, 2000^4), 173–174; Suerbaum, "Autobiographie und Epistolographie," 444; H. Beck and U. Walter, *Die Frühen römischen Historiker. Band II. Von Coelius Antipater bis Pomponius Atticus. Herausgegeben, übersetzt und kommentiert von …* (Darmstadt, 2004), 100.

[114] Peter, *HRR*, 1:CCLV; Münzer, "Rutilius," 1274.

[115] Cf. Cic., *Font*. 38.

[116] *De orat*. 1.229, 1.231 (*imitatus est* [*Rutilius Rufus*] *homo romanus et consularis veterum illum Socratem*); cf. Quint., *Inst*. 11.1.3: *P. Rutilius [. . .] illo paene Socratico genere defensionis est usus*. For more references, see Münzer, "Rutilius," 1274.

[117] See *De orat*. 227–228; *Brut*. 85–88.

that would have been called for by such a key trial.[118] Kallet-Marx has proposed that the style of the defense was not so much due to Rutilius' inclinations, but rather that, at that date, Crassus and Antonius were cooperating with Marius, who was close to the group that formed the *equites*. Other information confirms that the group of the *optimates* did not have the cohesion that has traditionally been attributed to it. Accordingly, Rutilius did not benefit from senatorial solidarity, or in other words, he was sacrificed to appease the *equites*. In the face of having to accept such conditions, he devised his strategy for the trial and made virtue out of necessity.[119] If this is so, it is reasonable to question the literary tradition concerning Rutilius' "austere" defense. Amiotti[120] has also emphasized how a detailed examination of ancient testimonies allows one to question Rutilius' traditional image, an image in which his trial and subsequent exile constitute the basic element.

Rutilius exiled himself in Mitylene, a city on Lesbos. When, in the year 88 and as a result of the war against Mithridates, a massacre of Romans and Italians took place in this city, it is said that Rutilius escaped thanks to his change of attire to Greek dress;[121] Amiotti[122] has noted how more of the *negotiatores* close to Marius were victims of the massacre, whereas Romans favorable to the senatorial party, such as Rutilius, received a more benevolent treatment. According to a probably false report, a letter from Rutilius advising the king to proceed with the killing was found among Mithridates' documents.[123] In any case, Rutilius left Mitylene and went to Smyrna. There, in the year 85, he met Sulla, who invited him to return to Rome. Rutilius preferred to remain in exile.[124] Cicero, traveling through Asia, visited him in the year 78.[125] He must have died around the age of eighty.[126]

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[118] Cic., *Brut*. 115.

[119] Cf. Kallet-Marx, "The Trial of Rutilius Rufus," 135: "Even if we accept the tradition of a "Socratic" stance, this means only having made a virtue out of a necessity."

[120] G. Amiotti, "A proposito dell'immagine di P. Rutilio Rufo, L'immagine dell'uomo politico," in *L'immagine dell'uomo politico: vita publica e morale nell'antichità*, ed. M. Sordi (Milan, 1991), 159–167.

[121] Cic., *Rab. Post*. 27.

[122] G. Amiotti, "I Greci e il massacro degli Italici nell' 88 a. C.," *Aevum* 54 (1980), 132–139.

[123] Theophanes of Mitylene, *FGrHist* 188 F1 (= Plut., *Pomp*. 37.2–3). Regarding the report, see V. Anastasiadis, "Inventing a kakoetheuma: a propagandistic attack against P. Rutilius Rufus," *PP* 54 (1999), 48–68.

[124] Val. Max. 6.4.4. For more references, see Münzer, "Rutilius," 1276.

[125] Cic., *Brut*. 85.

[126] Cf. Münzer, "Rutilius," 1276.

Rutilius Rufus' multifaceted intellectual figure is made up of the jurist, orator, philosopher, and historian. His activity as a jurist, described to us by Cicero,[127] fits with the information about his connections to the Scaevolae, among whom dedication to law was traditional.[128] He is the one responsible for the procedural formula called *actio Rutiliana*.[129]

Malcovati offers us six reports concerning Rutilius the orator. Four refer to the trial for extortion, all affirm his innocence, and three additionally comment on the austerity of his defense.[130] The sobriety of these reports forces us to depend mostly upon Cicero for more information about Rutilius' oratory. Cicero qualifies him as an excessively serious and severe author: lacking in *ingenium oratorium*, his style expressed itself in stark, dry compositions. Cicero accounts for this by citing his stoicism and his past as a disciple of Panaetius.[131] According to Suetonius, Augustus read a speech by Rutilius *De modo aedificiorum* in the senate and made it known among the people via an edict. For Münzer, this indicates that his oratorical work was transmitted at least until the beginnings of the imperial era.[132]

Rutilius' fame as a philosopher is not due to any specifically philosophical writings. More than anything, it is a reflection of his personal virtues, of a vital attitude that corresponds to the stoic training Cicero attributes to him. In this context it is important to mention his relationship with Scipio and those figures integral to the so-called (and often questioned) "Scipionic Circle."[133] Nonetheless, the trial and subsequent exile are the elements that most feed Rutilius' prestige, a prestige that is tinged with exceptional admiration as well as apology. His moral rigor, seriousness,

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[127] Cic., *Brut*. 113, *Off*. 2.47.

[128] Cic., *De orat*. 39.

[129] Regarding Rutilius as a jurist, see the indications and bibliographic references provided by Kierdorf, "R. Rufus, P.," 1170; Suerbaum, "Autobiographie und Epistolographie," 445; Chassignet, *L'annalistique romaine*, XIV.

[130] Fr. 3–6, *ORF* 45, 1:170–171.

[131] Cic., *Brut*. 110: *oratorium ingenium defuit*; 113: *tristi et severo genere dicendi versatus est*; 114: *sunt eius orationes ieiunae* [...] *Panaeti auditor, prope perfectus in Stoicis*; 116: *habemus igitur in Stoicis oratoribus Rutilium*; 119: *habet a Stoicis id quod ab illis petendum est; sed dicere didicit a dicendi magistris eorumque more se exercuit*.

[132] Suet. *Aug*. 89 (= fr. 2, *ORF* 45, 1:169–170). Münzer, "Rutilius," 1276.

[133] Important insights in the discussion over the existence of the "Scipionic Circle" were contributed by H. Strasburger, "Posidonios on Problems of the Roman Empire," *JRS* 55 (1965), 40–513; Astin, *Scipio Aemilianus*, 294–306. Concerning the problem, see the *dossier* elaborated by W. Suerbaum ("Allgemaines zum Scipionen-Kreis," in *Handbuch der lateinischen Literatur der Antike*, ed. Suerbaum, 483–487), for whom the significance of this circle can be relativized but not negated.

temperance, sobriety, and innocence are repeated over and over again by an ample range of sources from Cicero to Orosius passing via Ovid, Velleius, Florus, and Quintilian. Seneca represents perhaps the culminating point in this "rhetorical canonization" that was orchestrated around the image of Rutilius.[134]

Two compositions are generally cited when speaking of Rutilius the historian. Athenaeus attributes to him a *History of Rome* (Ῥωμαικὴ ἱστορία), written in Greek, a claim that some have tried to corroborate with other sources.[135] The other composition is *De vita sua*, which is supposed to consist of at least five books according to the citations given by Charisius, Diomedes, and Isidorus of Seville.[136] Six fragments of the *History of Rome* are included in Peter's edition; the same ones appear with minor changes and additions in later editions.[137] None of these fragments add any information of interest to what is already known regarding Rutilius' life. Additionally, all of them are brief and concrete citations from which one cannot extract conclusions referring to the character, orientation, or general traits of the *History of Rome*. It also happens that the majority of them refer to events or people situated in the temporal arch of contemporary history—with reference in some cases to events close to Rutilius[138]—whereas those that are not from that time can be explained as digressions within a work that is basically centered on the present. Thus emerges the hypothesis that the *History of Rome* is nothing other than the Greek translation of *De vita sua*. Such a hypothesis was already proposed

[134] See the list of sources offered by Münzer, "Rutilius," 1275; likewise consult G.L. Hendrickson, "The *Memoirs* of Rutilius Rufus," *CPh* 18 (1933), 174–175. Cf. Vell. 2.13.2: *P. Rutilium, virum non saeculi sui sed omnis aevi optimum*; Bardon, *La littérature latine inconnue*, 110: "Il n'y a guère de personnalité plus admirée des Anciens que celle de P. Rutilius Rufus."

[135] Ath. 4.66, 6.108 = Jacoby, *FGrHist* 815 T7; Jacoby himself signals as texts that support Athenaeus' claim his T1 (A = App., *Hisp*. 393; B = Cic., *Rep*. 1.17) and his F4 (= Plut., *Mar*. 28.8).

[136] Citations collected in fr. 7–15 of Peter, *HRR*, 1:189–190; in Jacoby, *FGrHist* 815 FF7–15, and in fr. 1–9 of Chassignet, *L'annalistique romaine*, 164–165.

[137] The same fragments appear in Jacoby's edition (*FGrHist* 815 FF1–6) as in Peter's (fr. 1–6, *HRR*, 1:186–187), with changes in the numeration. The Beck-Walter edition resembles that of Peter with the addition of one more fragment, no. 7 (= Gran. Lic. 26.6); that of Chassignet (frs. 1–8, *L'annalistique romaine*, 1–5) collects Peter's fragments and adds, under the title *incerta*, fr. 7 of Beck-Walter and one more, no. 8 (= Gran. Lic. 33.16–17). The additions of Beck-Walter and Chassignet were already present in the "Unsicheres" section of Jacoby's edition (*FGrHist* 815, F16 and 17). On the other hand, in fr. 2 (= Liv. 39.50.10 and 39.52.1) the distinct editors section the text at different points.

[138] For example, frs. 4–5 (1 and 4 in Jacoby) from Plutarch (*Mar*. 28.8 and *Pomp*. 37.4).

in the years during which Peter and Münzer were writing.[139] For Peter, the *History of Rome* is not a mere translation of *De vita sua*, since the Greek version expounded upon many questions that would have been obvious to the Latin public but would have needed to be explained to a Greek reader. In addition, the calumnies that Rutilius was the object of apropos the war against Mithridates would have stimulated the writing of the *Histoy of Rome*, in which the defense against such calumnies was directed fundamentally to Greek society. Furthermore, Rutilius' opinions and points of view would have found a powerful spokesperson in Posidonius. Posidonius had personal contact with Rutilius,[140] spread his fame and collected his opinions; as a consequence of which, the work of Rutilius was forgotten and both his figure and thoughts were known via Posidonius.[141] A similar position is adopted by Münzer, for whom the difference between the two historical works lies mainly in the difference in public—Greek and Latin—to whom they were directed. *De vita sua* would have been used directly by Cicero, Sallustius, and Livy, whereas the *History of Rome* would have exerted its influence by way of Posidonius. Livy and Posidonius' widespread dissemination meant that the historiographic tradition referring to Rutilius' era was dominated by Rutilius' own opinions, although these were not present directly but rather via intermediate sources.[142]

The fragments of *De vita sua* are extremely poor in content and therefore do not help to solve the question regarding the basic equivalency between the two works.[143] Following Peter and Münzer, Hendrickson intervened in the discussion to remark that the *History of Rome* must have been a Greek version or paraphrase of *De vita sua*. He also observed that the Greek work had had quite a wider diffusion than the Latin one, to

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[139] For the previous bibliography, see Münzer, "Rutilius," 1279.

[140] Cf. Cic., *Off*. 310.

[141] Peter, *HRR*, 1:CCLIX–CCLX.

[142] Münzer, "Rutilius," 1279–1280.

[143] In Peter's edition, the fragments of *De vita sua* are restricted to six brief citations transmitted by Charisius (*HRR*, frs. 7–12, 1:189); in addition to them are three meager mentions from Isidorus and Diomedes entitled *incertae sedis reliquiae* (*HRR*, frs. 13–15, 1:190). All of these fragments are collected by Chassignet as belonging to *De vita sua* (*L'annalistique romaine*, frs. 1–9, 164–166); Chassignet also edits four more fragments (*L'annalistique romaine*, frs. 10–13, 166–169) under the title of *incerta aut incertae sedis*: Cic., *Brut*. 86–87 (on their ascription to Rutilius' written work, see G.L. Hendrickson, "The *Memoirs* of Rutilius Rufus," *CPh* 18 [1933], 160–162); App., *Hisp*. 393 (= *FGrHist* 815 T1); Granius Licinianus, 33.16–17; and Plut., *Mar*. 28.8 (these last two edited by the author as fragments of the *History of Rome*).

the point that Cicero's information concerning Rutilius probably derives from the Greek writing and not from *De vita sua*. *De vita sua* seems to have disappeared almost completely by the end of the century it was written in, and the citations present in Charisius and Diomedes (the first that specify the title of the work) must have come from sources scarcely earlier than the second century. Hendrickson also notes that Posidonius seems to have played a fundamental role in spreading Rutilius' work in Greek.[144] Recent studies tend to admit that the Latin autobiography and the *History of Rome* represent two distinct works.[145] In addition, Rutilius' enormous influence via Livy and Posidonius on the historiographic tradition concerning his epoch is generally accepted.[146]

The paucity of the fragments of *De vita sua* makes it difficult to extract relevant information from them. Hendrickson claims to discern a fearless and self-confident tone in the preserved remains, a tone that would have been appropriate for a man who felt free in the face of the morals of his times and the attitudes held by the great political figures of the moment. This tone is also in keeping with the stoic αὐτάρκεια attributed to him by the sources. Bardon, for his part, speaks of the violent energy and vigorous harshness as the ingredients of an account destined to expose the vicissitudes of an honest and poorly rewarded life.[147] Obviously, *De vita sua* had an apologetic character. Beyond this affirmation, it is possible only to note that in Rutilius' autobiography there is a similar structure to that which can be imagined to have existed in the work of Scaurus, although with different elements. In this last work, Scaurus' political dimension—his exceptional position as a dignitary—constitutes the key around which the composition revolves. The life of its author is presented as a report whose different parts are put together in order to focalize on a single, central element. The autobiography thus serves to build and transmit a carefully crafted, totalizing vision of the main

[144] Hendrickson, "The *Memoirs* of Rutilius Rufus," 166–175. Jacoby does not express an explicit position on this polemic, since the section of his *Fragmente* wherein lies Rutilius (*Dritter Teil. C*) lacks commentary. Nonetheless, the use of reduced typography in the fragments corresponding to *De vita sua* demonstrates adhesion to the hypothesis that this work was known in its Greek version.

[145] Chassignet, *L'annalistique romaine*, XV–XVI; Beck-Walter, *Die Frühen römischen Historiker*, 101–102; more cautious is Suerbaum, "Autobiographie und Epistolographie," 446.

[146] Suerbaum, "Autobiographie und Epistolographie," 447; Beck-Walter, *Die Frühen römischen Historiker*, 102.

[147] Hendrickson, "The *Memoirs* of Rutilius Rufus," 172–173; Bardon, *La littérature latine inconnue*, 112.

character's public persona. In Rutilius' case, the trial for corruption and resulting exile provided the nucleus around which revolved the bulk of information and news that we have about him and his work. Here, again, a specific item from the author's public life became the cornerstone upon which the author's entire personality was built. As in Scaurus' case, this prototypical figure sketched around a select component took on a life of its own. Therefore, once the works that supported it were lost, this depiction survived in the literary tradition and converted itself into an *exemplum*.

The personal image projected by Q. Lutatius Catulus contains a variety of aspects missing in the exemplary portraits of Scaurus and Rutilius. He was born around the year 150[148] into a family that Cicero describes as illustrious,[149] but that had lost renown and public fame by the end of the third century.[150] Lutatius Catulus' political career before his candidature to the consulate is little known. It is possible that in 109 he held the office of *praetor*.[151] He attempted to become a consul in 106 but was not nominated; his next two efforts were equally unsuccessful.[152] Only in 102, on the fourth try, did he become consul, having Marius as colleague; it has been thought that Marius' support was decisive for his election.[153] The great problem of the time was the barbarian threat in northern Italy. Since the year 113, the Roman armies had had repeated confrontations with barbarian peoples, mainly the Cimbri and the Teutons, displaced to the south from the shores of the Northern Sea. The last clash, the battle of Arausio (now Orange, north of Marseilles) in October 105, had ended in a disastrous Roman defeat, which provoked in the Romans the return of the ancient fear of an invasion by the Transalpine barbarians. The invasion did not take place at that time, since the Cimbri deviated from

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[148] This date fits with the fact that Catulus tried to become consul for the first time in 107. Furthermore, it is consonant with the *Catulus senex* formula used by Cicero in *De orat.* (2.12) to introduce him as a speaker in the dialogue (which, as is known, is set in 91) and with the observations that are generally made about him in this work; see F. Münzer, "Lutatius" (7), *RE* 13.2 (1927), 2072–2073.

[149] Cic., *Planc.* 12: *summa in familia natus.*

[150] Münzer, "Lutatius," 2072; E. Badian, "Capio and Norbanus. Notes on the Decade 100–90 B.C.," *Historia* 6 (1957), 322–323.

[151] According to Münzer ("Lutatius," 2074), who bases himself upon Cic., *Verr.* 3.209, he had been praetor in Sicily, a hypothesis not shared by Broughton, *MRR*, 1:545.

[152] Cic., *Planc.* 12; cf. *Mur.* 36.

[153] Regarding the political and familial connections between Lutatius Catulus and Marius, consult Badian, "Capio and Norbanus," 323. In 102 Marius was consul for the fourth time.

their route toward Hispania, and the other populations continued their devastation in the south of Gaul. This allowed Marius, elected consul uninterruptedly from 104 to 100, to proceed with new recruitments and to reorganize the army and train the Roman forces. In the year 102, the invading peoples made a plan together by which the Teutons and the Ambrones were to enter Italy from the west, along the coast and by crossing the Alpine passes, while the Cimbri were to come in, with other barbarian peoples, through the Eastern Alps. Faced with this situation, Marius went with four legions to the south of Gaul and obtained an important victory near *Aquae Sextiae* (Aix-en-Provence). His colleague, Lutatius Catulus, set off with two legions to the Eastern Alps in order to contain the Cimbri and their allies. The military operations carried out by Catulus were overshadowed by Marius' glorious victory in *Aquae Sextiae*. Nonetheless, it seems that Catulus, with much effort and at the cost of retreat and numerous losses, was able to contain the barbarians in the north of Italy.[154] In any case, during the next year (101) Marius as consul and Catulus as proconsul united forces and carried out the victory of *Vercellae*, which ended the threat posed by the Cimbri and their allies.

The events of 102–101 constituted without a doubt the most transcendent episode in Lutatius' political life. He dedicated his autobiography, titled *Liber de consulatu et rebus gestis suis*, to this occurrence, and in it he also expressed a disagreement with Marius that eventually became his death sentence. The two consuls of 101 shared the triumph obtained from the battle of *Vercellae*, but they also fought over the merits and participation of each of them vis-à-vis the victory.[155] During the crisis of the year 100, Lutatius aligned himself, along with Scaurus and Rutilius, with the *optimates*.[156] In the year 90, on occasion of the so-called "Social War" (*bellum sociale*), he put himself at the disposal of the state,[157] as did many other leaders, both *populares* and *optimates*. He was about sixty years old and his stepbrother, L. Iulius Caesar, was consul at that time. A short time after, in 87, when the struggle between L. Cornelius Cinna and Cn. Octavius became a civil war, Catulus aligned himself with the

[154] For an extended treatment of the operations directed by Catulus, their shortcomings and achievements, see R.G. Lewis, "Catulus and the Cimbri. 102 B.C.," *Hermes* 102 (1974), 90–109.

[155] The public opinion of the time considered Marius responsible for the victory of *Vercellae*, but the controversy that arose between Marius and Lutatius is also reflected in the literary tradition. See the references offered on this topic by Münzer, "Lutatius," 2077.

[156] Cic., *Rab. perd.* 21, 26; *Phil.* 8.15.

[157] Cic., *Font.* 43; cf. Broughton, *MRR*, 2:29.

latter. The conflict ended, as is known, with the arrival of Marius and Cinna in the capital and the declaration of numerous death sentences for their political adversaries. One of the condemned was Catulus. Various sources relay how his appeals to Marius to change the sentence were useless, and how, therefore, Catulus took his own life.[158]

Catulus was an eminent political figure. Cicero admits to having great admiration for him, due perhaps not only to cultural affinities but also to moral and political ones.[159] In the dialogue *De oratore*—concretely in the second and third books, where he substitutes Scaevola as a speaker—he appears as an erudite man, of delicate taste, great connoisseur of Greek culture, capable of perfectly writing and speaking Greek, but also capable of expressing himself in a pure and elegant Latin.[160] Other passages by Cicero praise his intellectual, ethical, and human qualities.[161] It is clear that this esteem had a substantial influence in subsequent tradition.[162] Nevertheless, other sources of information concerning Catulus appear to confirm Cicero's image of him, at least in part and with regard to his intellectual gifts. From a literary viewpoint, there are three aspects worth tracing in Catulus: those of the orator, the poet, and the historian.

What we know of Catulus' oratory basically depends upon the reports Cicero offers. His judgments can be found in the passages of *De oratore* and *Brutus* collected by Malcovati.[163] In them, Cicero acclaims Catulus' pure, irreproachable, elegant, and delicate diction. The only concrete information regarding one of his speeches is again provided by Cicero in a comment, according to which the *laudatio funebris* recited by Catulus in honor of his mother Popilia was the first eulogy of this kind dedicated to a woman in Rome.[164]

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[158] Cic., *Tusc*. 5.56 (… *necesariis Catuli deprecantibus non semel* [Marius] *repondit, sed saepe: "moriatur"*); *De orat*. 3.9; Plut., *Mar*. 44.8. See also the sources provided by Münzer, "Lutatius," 2078–2079.

[159] See Münzer, "Lutatius," 2078–2080. For Münzer, Catulus was one of the leaders of the moderate party, a circumstance that would largely explain Cicero's attitude toward him. On this point, see Chassignet, *L'annalistique romaine*, XVII.

[160] See the references given by E. Courbaud, *Cicéron, De l'orateur. Livre premier. Texte établi et traduit par …* (Paris, 1967), XXX–XXXI.

[161] *Rab. perd*. 26 (*in quo summa sapientia, eximia virtus, singularis humanitas fuit*); *Mur*. 36 (*humanitate, sapientia, integritate antecellens*); *Planc*. 12 (*sapientissimus et sanctissimus vir*).

[162] Münzer, "Lutatius," 2080.

[163] *Frs*. 1–4, *ORF* 63, 1:219–220.

[164] Cic., *De orat*. 3.29 (= fr. 5, *ORF* 63, 1:220). The report has been questioned; see T.W. Hillard, "Popilia and *laudationes funebres*," *Antichthon* 35 (2001), 45–53.

Gellius and Apuleius speak to us of a group of poets active between the second and first centuries among which figures Lutatius Catulus.[165] Usually known as the *preneoteric* poets, they are considered to have introduced personal and love themes in Latin poetry. Their source of inspiration was Hellenistic epigrammatic poetry, and their use of its formulas and methods was a first in Roman literature.[166] It has been under discussion for some time whether or not the preneoteric poets were a real literary circle or if the literary affinities that united them were due to the common cultural context in which their work developed and to the influence of the same Greek models.[167] In any case, the preneoteric poets had substantial literary significance. They were not only pioneers in cultivating personal and romantic poetry and in adopting the methods used by the Hellenistic epigram. They also clearly anticipated the tendencies that were to predominate in successive Roman poetry.

Two epigrams by Lutatius Catulus have been preserved, transmitted by Cicero and Gellius.[168] Both are of a homoerotic content and are written in the first person. In both, the expression of emotions has a highly poignant quality. But, at the same time, this emotive quality comes together with different elements that tinged both compositions with a tone suitable to the literary *divertimento*. One such element is the conscious adoption of stylistic devices resounding with the echo of Hellenistic models. Additionally, those stylistic structures were mixed up with tropes and formulas that came from the incipient Latin tradition. Lutatius Catulus' epigrams definitively reveal a mentality that is cultured, refined, and that leans toward the literary exquisiteness fitting to the Alexandrian taste. The connection with intellectuals and poets seems also to have been an important element in the life of Lutatius Catulus. We are aware, thanks to Cicero,[169] that he knew the Greek poet Antipatros of Sidon, famous at that time. He was the patron of the poet Archias, author of an epic poem on the war against the Cimbri.[170] He dedicated his

[165] Gell. 19.9.10; Apul., *Apol*. 9. Both authors mention Valerius Aedituus, Porcius Licinus, and Q. Lutatius Catulus together and in the same order.

[166] Cf. G. Laguna Mariscal, "La aportación de Q. Lutacio Cátulo a la lírica romana (epigr. 2)," *CFC(L)* 5 (1993), 56–57.

[167] See the references offered by A. Perutelli, "Lutazio Catulo poeta," *RFIC* 118 (1990): 258–259; Suerbaum, "Autobiographie und Epistolographie," 452–453.

[168] Cic., *Nat. deor*. 1.79; Gell. 19.9.14 (C. Buechner, *Fragmenta poetarum latinorum epicorum et lyricorum* [Stuttgart, 1995^3], 95–96).

[169] *De orat*. 194.

[170] Cic., *Arch*. 5–6, 19.

book of memoirs to his friend the poet A. Furius (Antias).[171] He had an intimate relationship with his freedman Lutatius Daphnis, a philologist and scholar.[172]

Lutatius Catulus' poetic orientations shed a light on his character that distances him from the simpler and more coherent representations of his two contemporaries in the field of autobiography, Aemilus Scaurus and Rutilius Rufus. Politics occupies a central role in the images of these last two, so that all of their other activities move around this basic dedication or are tightly related to it. On the other hand, for Lutatius Catulus, poetry seems to have implied the cultivation of personal feelings and of sentiments removed from the public life. In this way, the dedication to poetic endeavors complicates the coherence of his portrait. For the rest, the concept of poetry as leisure and evasion, as a field concerned with the purely private facets of life, could have been a novelty, the fruit of a reception of a Greek culture different from that which, until then, predominated in Rome.[173] This new cultural attitude, more complex and refined, seems to be reflected as well in the judgment that he made, according to Cicero, of the work of the historian Coelius Antipater.[174] We can similarly interpret the accounts we have of Lutatius Catulus' artistic tastes and of his appreciation of Greek fine arts.[175] Lutatius Catulus' artistic and poetic interests can be related to the fact that his autobiography took—as we will see—the form of *commentarii*. According to ancient rhetorical theory, the most noteworthy characteristic of the *commentarii* is their sparseness, their lack of adornments.[176] It may be thought that the choice of a form like the *commentarii* is in harmony with a refined mentality for which simplicity and absence of superfluous decoration are outstanding attributes of literary writing.

In addition to the *Liber de consulatu suo*, autobiographical in content, Lutatius Catulus is also credited with a historical composition entitled *Communis historia* or *Communes historiae*.[177] The meaning that is to

[171] Cic., *Brut*. 132.
[172] Suet., *Gramm*. 3.5; cf. Plin., *Nat. His*. 7.128.
[173] With respect to this point, see Perutelli, "Lutazio Catulo poeta," 276–277.
[174] Cic., *De orat*. 2.54: cf. Münzer, "Lutatius," 2081.
[175] Cic., *Verr*. 4.126; Plin., *Nat. His*. 34.54. With regard to the *Porticus Catuli*, see the report offered by S.M. Cerutti, "The Location of the Houses of Cicero and Clodius and the Porticus Catulli on the Palatine Hill in Rome," *AJPh*. 118 (1997), 417–426.
[176] Cf. Avenarius, *Lukians Schrift zur Geschichtsschreibung*, 101.
[177] The title appears in the singular form in Prob., *Verg. georg*. 3.293 (= Peter, *HRR*, fr. 6, 1:192; Chassignet, *L'annalistique romaine*, fr. 1, 6), in plural in Serv. auct., *Ad Aen*.

be understood from the title of the composition is also debated.[178] The presence in many of its fragments of names and information related to the legendary origins of Rome have led some to believe that the *Communis historia* was within the tradition of foundational stories developed by the first Roman historians ranging from Fabius Pictor to Cato.[179] The strong links that tie this tradition of foundational stories with Greek erudition[180] betray traits and similarities very much in consonance with Lutatius Catulus' refined intellectual personality. In addition, a good number of fragments contain etiological and etymological explanations. As is well known, this was a customary procedure in the erudite and archaeological literature produced in Greco-Latin antiquity. All of the above, however, would not be reason to believe that the *Communis historia* was a work dictated by strictly cultural interests and from which

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9.707 (= Peter, *HRR*, fr. 8, 1:193; Chassignet, *L'annalistique romaine*, fr. 3, 7). However, the authorship of this work, which was not cited by Cicero, is frequently questioned. In effect, all of the fragments mention Lutatius as their author. Now, Lutatius Catulus is generally known under the name of Catulus. For that reason it has been thought that the Lutatius to which is ascribed the *Communis historia* was actually Lutatius Daphnis, Lutatius Catulus' freedman, or even that the work was co-written. For bibliographic references on the question, see Chassignet, *L'annalistique romaine*, XXI. See also A. La Penna, "Sulla *Communis historia* di Lutazio," in *Studi su Varrone, sulla retorica, storiografia e poesia latina. Scritti in onore di B. Riposati* (Rieti-Milan, 1979), 233–236.

[178] Judging by the content of the reports that have been conserved, the *Communis historia* dealt with the legends related to Roman and Italian ancient history. The presence in these legends of Greek themes and characters gave rise to the hypothesis, stemming from Mommsen, that the title *Communis historia* (or *Communes historiae*) referred to the treatment of stories common to the Italian and Greek world. Regarding the genesis of this hypothesis, see Peter, *HRR*, 1:CCLXVII; La Penna, "Sulla *Communis historia* di Lutazio," 229–230. It is the supposition made by Bardon, *La littérature latine inconnue*, 122; La Penna, "Sulla," 232; Chassignet, *L'annalistique romaine*, XXII. For other theories, consult Bardon, "Sulla"; Suerbaum, "Autobiographie und Epistolographie," 451. Another conjecture, defended by Peter, is that the title referred to the presence in the work of well-known stories that circulated widely and were told without specifying the name of their authors (cf. Peter, *HRR*, 1:CCLXVII: *rectius alii de historiis* [i.e. *fabulis*] *vulgo notis cogitaverunt, quae sine nomine auctorum divulgatae essent*).

[179] This hypothesis was put forward by La Penna, "Sulla," 239–240. On the subject of the first Roman historiography, its characterization, and the importance of the foundational theme in it, consult D. Timpe, "Fabius Pictor und die Anfänge der römischen Historiographie," *ANRW* I 2 (1972), 928–969, *passim*, and "Erinnnerung als Lebenmacht und Geschichte als Literatur: Balanz und Ausblick," in *Förmen römischer Geschichtsschreibung*, eds. Eigler, Gotter, Luraghi, and Walter, 292–294. Cato can, to a certain degree, be included within this same tendency: see W. Kierdorf, "Catos *Origines* und die Anfänge der römischen Geschichtsschreibung," *Chiron* 10 (1980), 222–224.

[180] See with respect to this point M. Sehlmeyer, "Die Anfänge der antiquarischen Literatur in Rom. Motivation und Bezug zur Historiographie bis in die Zeit von Tuditanus und Gracchanus," in *Förmen römischer Geschichtsschreibung*, 160–161.

political motivations were absent. Since the era of the Gracchi, Roman authors who treated the field of antiquarianism had used arguments and themes charged with political connotations.[181] The abundant presence of Aeneas in the fragments of the *Communis historia* can reflect ideological positions related to the debates concerning war and public order that pervaded Roman society at that time.[182]

Cicero refers to the *Liber de consulatu suo* when he mentions a composition that Lutatius Catulus sent (*misit*) to his friend, the poet A. Furius. The topic of this composition was Catulus' consulate and the actions he took as a public officer.[183] The sending of the work to A. Furius, according to certain interpretations, was a result of the desire to put into the hands of the poet the material necessary for him to write an epic about the war against the Cimbri. Consequently, the composition which Cicero reports—made up of only one book—was in the style of the *commentarii* and offered information fitting for a work of historical content or, in this case, for a historical epic. With respect to this, a known passage is often cited wherein Cicero announces to L. Lucceius that he is willing to send him some *commentarii* apropos his political undertakings. These *commentarii* would provide the factual base for the production of a historical monograph in which Cicero was the main character.[184] Fronto is equally cited, who speaks of certain letters from Catulus (*Catuli litterae*) in which he recounts his deeds in flattering terms.[185] It is possible to relate Fronto's *litterae* with Cicero's *liber*, and likewise it can be thought that the *Liber de consulatu suo* was formally presented as *commentarii*.[186] Nonetheless, it must also be considered that, as Peter has noted, *misit* can have a dedicatory meaning. In any case, the *Liber de consulato suo*, although having the form of *commentarii*, was destined to circulate publicly, since there is

[181] Consult Sehlmeyer, "Die Anfänge der antiquarischen Literatur in Rom," 166–167.

[182] With reference to this point, see I. Bitto, "Per una proposta di interpretazione del denarius del monetiere M Herennius con leggenda *pietas*," *Messana* 3 (1990), 147–168.

[183] Cic., *Brut*. 132: … *ex eo libro, quem de consulatu et de rebus gestis suis* […] *misit ad A. Furium poetam*.

[184] Cic., *Epist*. 5.12.10: *si enim suscipis causam, conficiam commentarios rerum omnium*.

[185] Fronto, *Ad Verum Imp. Epistulae* 2.1.17 (van den Hout).

[186] Bardon, *La littérature latine inconnue*, 120; Schanz and Hosius, *Geschichte der römischen Literatur*, 207; G. Marasco, "L'apologia di Q. Lutazio Catulo e la tradizione sulla guerra Cimbrica," *GFF* 7 (1984), 75–84, 77. Münzer ("Lutatius," 2075) points out the lack of a clear distinction between ὑπομνήματα/*commentarii* and *litterae*. For more bibliographic references, see Suerbaum ("Autobiographie und Epistolographie," 450–451) and Chassignet (*L'annalistique romaine*, XCVIII).

no other way of explaining its seemingly careful crafting. Cicero praises the purity (*integritas*) of his Latin, as well as his smooth style, similar to that of Xenophon.[187]

Cicero himself reports the lack of success obtained by *de consulato suo*, since in *Brutus* (132), it is said that at the time of writing nobody read Lutatius Catulus' work or his autobiography anymore. Only three fragments of this last have reached us. They all come from the *Life of Marius* by Plutarch and refer to the battle of Vercellae.[188] Plutarch, in fact, indicates that he knows Lutatius Catulus' composition via an intermediary.[189] Therefore, the three conserved fragments come only indirectly from the original work, a work about which we have little information other than the notice provided by Cicero about its presentation as *commentarii*. The three fragments transmitted by Plutarch are very sparse in content, limited to technical data and a few comments referring to the battle of Vercellae. In the face of this situation, very little can be said about the *Liber de consulato suo*. It is obvious that Lutatius Catulus' goal was to defend his military command and to call into question Marius' merits. On the other hand, it does not seem logical to suppose that the disagreement between the two men and its final result, Lutatius Catulus' suicide, was based exclusively on competition for mere military glory. It would be more correct to infer, with Badian, that the two characters had shifting political relationships: first of alliance, and then of opposition.[190] In this case, the *Liber de consulatu et de rebus gestis suis* would have had an important political weight and would have been a reflection, a symptom, or aggravating factor in the struggle between Marius and a sector of Roman aristocracy that had previously supported him.

It is not by accident that political struggle, propaganda, and self-apology constitute the basic components of the *Liber de consulatu suo*. The same components can be attributed with certainty to the autobiographical works of Scipio Nasica, Aemilius Scaurus, and Rutilius Rufus,

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[187] Cic., *Brut*. 132 (*molli et Xenophontio genere sermones*).

[188] Plut., *Mar*. 25.6–8, 26.10, 27.6–7.

[189] Plut., *Mar*. 25.8. The intermediary source was probably Sulla's autobiography (as in Peter, *HRR*, 1:CCLXVI; Bardon, *La littérature latine inconnue*, 120; R. Flacelière and É. Chambry, *Plutarque. Vies. Tome VI. Pyrros/Marius—Lysandre/Sylla. Texte établi et traduit par …* [Paris, 1971], 85; Marasco, "L'apologia di Q. Lutazio Catulo," 83–84). However, the name of Posidonius has also been suggested (as in J. Malitz, *Die Historien des Posidonios* [Munich, 1983], 226–228). For more references, see Chassignet, *L'annalistique romaine*, XCVII–XCVIII.

[190] Cf. Badian, "Capio and Norbanus," 331–332, 335–336, 341–343. See likewise Marasco, "L'apologia di Q. Lutazio Catulo," 80–83.

and with all probability to Scipio Africanus' *Letter to Philip*. Roman political autobiography arose during a time of social transformation. Its authors were public figures in conflict with the existing constitutional system or who played an important role in the political arena. In addition, it dealt with subjects under current debates or with themes that fed public controversy. All these characteristics contribute to the first autobiographies of the Republican period resembling the political pamphlet. The fact that all this production has been lost as well as the dearth of the preserved fragments indicates that, beyond the horizon of its own time, it had a very limited impact upon Roman cultural tradition. The shortage of fragments also invites the suspicion that its literary quality was not excessively high. One exception, nevertheless, was Rutilius Rufus, whose portrait, transformed into *exemplum*, occupied a prominent place in Roman political *imaginarium*. A second exception, although of less consequence, was that of Aemilius Scaurus, whose figure also has a place in the gallery of Roman traditional leaders.[191]

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CHAPTER FIVE

THE LATE REPUBLIC: AUTOBIOGRAPHIES AND MEMOIRS IN THE AGE OF THE CIVIL WARS

Jeffrey Tatum

Introduction

In the year 55 Cicero composed—and circulated—his well-known letter to Lucius Lucceius (Cic., *Fam.* 5.12), in which he sought from the senatorial historian a monograph focusing on his achievements as consul, his subsequent reverses and exile, and his ultimate and triumphant return to Rome. Although not unaffected by the verdict of posterity, Cicero puts heavy emphasis on his desire (*cupiditas*, a word used more than once to open and to close the letter) to profit from the literary celebration of his career during his own lifetime (*Fam.* 5.12.1 *vivi perfruamur*, 5.12.9 *vivi gloriola nostra perfruamur*). The public nature of this letter, confirmed by its style as well as its instructions to Atticus to secure a copy for himself, insures the normative quality of Cicero's sentiments—regardless of the modesty of the epistle's opening lines.[1] Fame and its associates—*laus*, *gloria*, *dignitas*—were undeniably precious commodities among the political elite, valuable (if contestable) in every area of political competition. Hence, in his oratory, Cicero's frequent resort to sometimes lengthy rehearsals of his own merits, a tactic too often confused with mere personal vanity.[2] The immediate object of Cicero's desire in his letter to Lucceius is not simply celebrity but instead inscription into Rome's historical narrative—now and not later—a passion bound up with his abiding political ambition, his *studium laudis*, itself a proper aristocratic impulse.[3]

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[1] Instructions to Atticus: *Att.* 4.6.4, 4.9.2, 4.11.12. Discussion of *Fam.* 5.12: J. Hall, "Cicero to Lucceius (*fam.* 5.12) in its Social Context: *valde bella*?," *CP* 93 (1998), 308–321.

[2] W. Allen, Jr., "Cicero's Conceit," *TAPA* 85 (1954), 121–144.

[3] On *laus*, see J. Hellegouarc'h, *Le vocabulaire latin des relations et des parties politiques sous la république* (Paris, 1963), 366–369; on the relationship between *laus*, *gloria* and *dignitas*, see Hellegouarc'h, *Vocabulaire latin*, 399–400.

Cicero craves to be written up, and he raises, at *Fam.* 5.12.8, the possibility of his turning to autobiography as a medium for promulgating and preserving his story. This alternative, however, he resists, or so he claims, owing to the reality that its result is an account possessing less than total credibility and authority (*Fam.* 5.12.8 *minor … fides, minor auctoritas*)—real but, in the event, not really insurmountable impediments to autobiographical composition.[4] The author of his own history, Cicero observes, is constrained in matters of praising and blaming (*Fam.* 5.12.8). But inasmuch as these were limitations that likewise disturbed any historian of contemporary events (Plin., *Ep.* 5.8.13 … *tum si laudaveris parcus, si culpaveris nimius fuisse discaris*), one should perhaps not take these worries too literally from any member of a class of persons who, as Syme once put it, were "not disposed to self-dispraisement."[5] Tacitus, no stranger to the requirement of at least ostensible impartiality, believed that for the virtuous, it was not a symptom of arrogance to write autobiography but instead a reflection of an author's confidence in the excellence of his character: neither Rutilius Rufus, he insists, nor Aemilius Scaurus had been criticized for falsifications in their memoirs (Tac., *Agr.* 1.3).

It is impossible to know how common the practice of autobiography was in the late Republic, not least because it could assume multiple guises.[6] Rutilius Rufus and Aemilius Scaurus touched upon the whole or at the very least a large portion of their careers, whereas Quintus Lutatius

[4] By 55 Cicero had already composed his self-encomiastic (and public) letter to Pompey (Cic., *Sull.* 67; cf. *Fam.* 5.7), a Greek account of his consulship (Cic., *Att.* 1.19.10) and an epic on the same topic (for *De consulatu suo*, see below).

[5] R. Syme, *Sallust* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1964), 155; cf. W. Suerbaum, "Autobiographie und Epistolographie," in *Die archaische Literature vond den Anfängen bis Sullas Tod: die vorliterarische Periode und die Zeit von 240 bis 78 v. Chr.*, ed. W. Suerbaum (Munich, 2002), 437–438. By contrast, Riggsby takes seriously the constraints adduced by Cicero (and alluded to by Pliny) and their implications for the compositional strategies of autobiography: A.M. Riggsby, "Memoir and Autobiography in Republican Rome," in *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography*, ed. J. Marincola (Oxford, 2008), 267–268.

[6] For autobiography as commonplace, see P. Scholz, "Sullas *commentarii*—eine literarische Rechtfertigung. Zu Wesen und Funktion der autobiographischen Schriften in der späten Römischen Republik," in *Formen römischer Geschichtsschreibung von den Anfängen bis Livius. Gattungen, Autoren, Kontexte*, eds. U. Eigler, U. Gotter, N. Luraghi & U. Walter (Darmstadt, 2003), 173–175. For ancient autobiography in multiple guises, see T. Baier, "Autobiographie in der späten römischen Republik," in *Antike Autobiographien: Werke, Epochen, Gattungen*, ed. M. Reichel (Cologne, 2005), 123–126; S. Kurczyk, *Cicero und die Inszenierung der eigenen Vergangenheit: autobiographisches Schrieben in der späten römischen Republik* (Cologne, 2006), 19–42 with further references.

Catulus, in a composition that must also be deemed autobiographical, restricted his focus to the events of his consulship (the year 102).[7] Both Cicero and Tacitus allege that many illustrious men turned their hands to autobiography (Cic., *Fam.* 5.12.8; Tac., *Agr.* 1.3), but these claims—vague assertions of autobiography's traditional stature—can hardly be pressed in their specific contexts, especially if apologetic gestures along these lines were no more than formulaic features of a genre that was (strictly speaking) neither history nor biography.[8] What is remarkable about so many Roman autobiographies—and perhaps a reflection of their contemporary engagement and focus—is their short shelf life. By Cicero's day, the memoirs of Scaurus and Catulus, for all their recommendations, were read by almost no one apart from the learned orator. And even he never mentions the autobiography of Rutilius Rufus.[9]

Sulla

The autobiography of Lucius Cornelius Sulla, by contrast, ample in scale and fascination, endured. Although it now subsists in only three fragments (Gell. 1.12.16, 20.6.3; Prisc., *Inst.* 9) as well as nearly twenty certain paraphrases (confirmed by way of explicit citation), it is obvious that Sulla was read and appropriated by numerous later writers, especially those like Velleius Paterculus, Plutarch, and Appian, who narrated events from the Social War, the Mithridatic War or from the civil war. None of these later writers engaged in mere transcription, it will be obvious, and so caution and qualification must attend their (unavoidable) exploitation in any attempt to recover the content and character of Sulla's memoirs. Still, the favorable episodes in Sulla's career, when they are reported in later narratives, can often with reasonable safety be assumed to originate in his autobiography, however many refractions and rewritings have intervened.[10] By this route the overall design and timbre of Sulla's composition comes into our distant if often indistinct view.

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[7] Suerbaum, "Autobiographie und Epistolographie," 438 (various autobiographical expressions), 440–451 (Scaurus, Rutilius Rufus, Catulus).

[8] Biography conventionally concedes the generic superiority of history (e.g., Nepos, *Praef.* 1.1: … *hoc genus scripturae leve et non satis dignum summorum virorum personis* …; Plut., *Alex.* 1.1–2), a convention, however, that does not entirely clarify matters for Roman autobiography inasmuch as "autobiography preceded biography at Rome" (Syme, *Sallust*, 154).

[9] Sallust certainly read it: *Iug.* 50.1; cf. Syme, *Sallust*, 155.

[10] On Sulla's subsequent influence, see H. Behr, *Die Selbstdarstellung Sullas* (Frank-

This is not the place to review the events of Sulla's career.[11] The circumstances under which he penned his autobiography, however, are important. In 79 Sulla returned to private life. He retired to Puteoli but, notwithstanding the insistence of Appian (*B. Civ*. 1.104), did not become indifferent to Roman politics. In the consular elections of that year he assiduously and successfully supported the candidacy of Quintus Lutatius Catulus, the son of the consul of 102. At the same time he resisted the election of Marcus Aemilius Lepidus, who enjoyed conspicuous and (for Sulla) unwelcome support from Pompey the Great. These activities led to a falling out between Sulla and his lieutenant (Plut., *Pomp*. 15; *Sull*., 34, 38). In the event—and in an unmistakable rebuff to Sulla's authority—Lepidus was returned at the top of the poll. Sulla could hardly have been pleased, and the very real danger of political strife emerged in the immediately obvious discord between the new consuls. At the same time, Sullan eminence and Lepidan ambition offered yet another hazardous flashpoint (Sall., *Hist*. 1.48 McGushin). Sulla's sudden death removed him from the scene. Lepidus' subversion was soon a reality, and military conflict, if not quite civil war, once again supervened. The atmosphere in which Sulla wrote his memoirs, then, was hardly one of detached tranquility: the deadly reformer could hardly have imagined

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furt am Main, 1993), 10–19; Suerbaum, "Autobiographie und Epistolographie," 455; C. Smith, "Sulla's *Memoirs*," in *The Lost Memoirs of Augustus and the Development of Roman Autobiography*, eds. C. Smith & A. Powell (Swansea, 2009), 79 (all with further references). On Vellius Paterculus, see R.G. Lewis, "Sulla's Autobiography: Scope and Economy," *Athenaeum* 79 (1991), 512–513, 517–518. On Plutarch, see E. Valgiglio, "L'autobiografia di Silla nelle biografie di Plutarco," *StudUrb* 49 (1975), 245–281. Appian requires special caution: it is plain that in Book 1 of his *Civil Wars* he relied heavily on Livy (W. Enßlin, "Appian und die Liviustradition zum ersten Bürgerkrieg," *Klio* 20 [1926], 415–465; E. Gabba, *Appiano e la storia delle guerre civili* [Florence, 1956], 91–93), who also employed (i.a.) Sulla's memoirs, a complication that entails in Appian a less transparent glimpse of the autobiography than is always appreciated (the difficulties are discussed in I. Calabi, "I Commentarii di Silla come fonte storica," *MAL* 8 [1950], *passim*). On Appian's reliance on multiple sources in Book 1, see D. Magnino, "Le 'guerre civile' di Appiano," *ANRW* 2.34.1 (1993), 524–525, 546–547 (with further bibliography). Sulla's, it must be observed, was not the only pro-Sullan account of the civil war: there was also L. Cornelius Sisenna (their focus was not identical: see, e.g., E. Badian, *Studies in Greek and Roman History* [Oxford 1964], 210–215), and at *Mar*. 26.3 = F6P Plutarch in fact ascribes his information to *hoi peri Sullan historousi*; cf. Calabi, *MAL* 8 (1950), 266.

[11] On Sulla's career, see A. Keaveney, *Sulla, The Last Republican* (London, 1982); R. Seager, "Sulla," in J.A. Crook, A. Lintott, and E. Rawson (eds.), *The Cambridge Ancient History*, 2nd ed., vol. 9 (Cambridge, 1994), 165–207, each of which provides abundant bibliography.

that his work was done, and his autobiography will not have been a mere diversion from the whirl of controversies in the midst of which it was composed.

Sulla extended himself to twenty-two books, the last of which he was still writing only two days before his death (F21P = Plut., *Sull.* 37.1; Suet., *Gramm.* 12.1–2). The precise structure of his work is poorly preserved in the specific references of later writers, though enough persists (especially when one takes into account the use made of Sulla's memoirs by subsequent historians) to make it clear that it was organized mostly along chronological lines. Sulla opened with a dedication to Lucius Licinius Lucullus and (although this remains controversial) proceeded to recount the origins and accomplishments of the Cornelii Sullae; the relatively modest circumstances of his youth, despite the antiquity of his patrician line, were also recorded (F1–3P = Plut., *Luc.* 1.4; Gell. 1.12.16, 20.6.3).[12] By the tenth book Sulla had reached events taking place in 86 (F16P = Plut., *Sull.* 17.2), and the final book reported a dream presaging Sulla's own death in 78, though the precise context of the passage is unknown (F21P = Plut. *Sull.* 37.1–3). Much of the autobiography, we can be certain from its extensive adaptation by Velleius, Appian, and especially Plutarch, consisted of narrative focusing on Sulla's military achievements: Sulla's exploits as a junior officer, his commands in the Social War, the Mithridatic War (these events most thoroughly and expansively) and, ultimately, the civil war in Italy.[13] There is good reason to believe that Book 21 related Sulla's victory at the Colline Gate in November 82, which urges the conclusion that the presence of Sulla's dream in the subsequent book does not indicate that Sulla's narrative had reached 78 by that point.[14] It has long been observed that, in our extant historiographical tradition, favorable treatment of Sulla begins to dry up once he has enjoyed his triumph in 81 and has claimed the honorific *Felix*.[15] Perhaps his narrative had gone little further at the time of his death. Admittedly, in F8P (Plut., *Sull.* 6.9) Sulla refers to his second consulship in 80, but it is possible that this comment came in a disquisition on the good fortune celebrated in his agnomen (it is in a similar context that Plutarch

[12] This reconstruction follows the conclusions of Lewis, *Athenaeum* 79 (1991), 509–517, but different views obtain: e.g., Behr, *Selbstdarstellung Sullas*, 13–14, 24–27.

[13] This is illustrated fully in Calabi, *MAL* 8 (1950).

[14] Events in Book 21: F20P = Prisc., *Inst.* 9, with Lewis, *Athenaeum* 79 (1991), 517–519 (who assembles the relevant evidence). On the nature of the concluding books, see Calabi, *MAL* 8 (1950), 249–252, 299–300.

[15] E.g., Calabi, *MAL* 8 (1950), 299–300; Lewis, *Athenaeum* 79 (1991), 518.

adduces the remark) and does not indicate that Sulla narrated the events of 80. Otherwise, it must be concluded that the narrative pace of the final two books left little space for any detailed treatment of his dictatorship, its proscriptions or its legislation, and in any case there is no trace of a Sullan account of these aspects of his career.[16] Perhaps Sulla saw in his triumph a fitting conclusion to the record of his achievements, or perhaps he had in mind a detailed account and justification for the events of his dictatorship that was interrupted by his unexpected collapse (it is of course impossible to surmise at what point he had originally intended to close his account).[17]

There is no consensus on Sulla's title for his work. Admittedly, the decision may have been taken by Epidacus, Sulla's learned freedman who completed Book 22 and who presumably saw to the autobiography's release (though individual books may have been released by their author before the work's conclusion). Latin citations—and one reference in Plutarch—suggest some version of *res gestae*, whereas Plutarch otherwise (and frequently) makes mention of Sulla's *hypomnemata*—his *commentarii*.[18] By this denomination, however, Plutarch may be reacting to the work's presentation of itself and its overall orientation. Greek political memoirs, of which the memoirs of Aratus are the most famous example, were routinely described as *hypmnemata*.[19] The Latin tradition of *com-*

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[16] On this point, see Calabi, *MAL* 8 (1950), 299–301.

[17] On the (probable) importance of the triumph in autobiography, see Smith, "Sulla's *Memoirs*," 74–75. It is routinely assumed that Sulla's memoirs included the text of a valedictory speech, delivered when he returned to private life (App., *B.Civ*. 1.104; cf. Plut., *Sull*. 34.3): e.g., Calabi, *MAL* 8 (1950), 300 (observed with qualifications); Behr, *Selbstdarstellung Sullas*, 11. This event is difficult to date precisely, and may have occurred as early as 81, when Sulla, as consul-designate for 80, could have resigned his dictatorship and circulated as a private citizen before taking up his consulship (thus Seager, *CAH*, 205), or, less probably, as late as 79 (for the range of possibilities see Broughton, *MRR*, 3.74–75). In any case, Appian, who registers his discovery of Sulla's speech in his sources ("they say"), need not be citing Sulla here; one can well imagine Livy punctuating his narrative with a speech at this point. For his part, Plutarch mentions no valedictory speech, a point that is admittedly inconclusive.

[18] *Res gestae*: F2, 3; 20P = Gell. 1.12.16, Gell. 20.6.3; Prisc., *Inst*. 9; cf. F1P = Plut., *Luc*. 1.4 (*hai heatou praxeis*). *Hypomnemata*: F8, 10A, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 21P = Plut., *Sull*. 6.9, *An seni* 6, Mar. 35.4, *Sull*. 14.3, *Sull*. 14.10, *Sull*. 17.2–4, *Sull*. 23.5., *Sull*. 37.1–3. F9P = Cic., *Div*. 1.72 refers to the work as *historia*, but this term is often unspecific in Cicero. It is probably decisive, as Valgiglio indicates (*StudUrb* 49 [1975], 256), that Caesar's commentaries are not routinely described in Latin sources *simply* as *res gestae*, in contrast to Sulla's memoirs.

[19] C. Fornara, *The Nature of Ancient History in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1983), 180–181; cf. the standard Greek rendering of Augustus' autobiography as *hypomnemata*: Plut., *Comp. Dem./Cic*. 3.1; *Brut*. 27.3; *Ant*. 22.2; App., *Illyr*. 14.

mentarii may also have had an influence of his perception of the work: in the dedication to Lucullus, Sulla conceded his friend's superior literary gifts and drew attention to his superior capacity for transforming the material contained in the memoirs into polished history:

> Sulla, in writing up his own achievements, dedicated his work to him [viz. Lucullus] on the grounds that he was better equipped than himself to compose and to arrange a proper history of the events (*ten historien*).
> (F1P = Plut., *Luc.* 1.4)

This posture of incompleteness and imperfection was characteristic of literary *commentarii*, shared by other instantiations of the genre and consistently assumed in the reactions of reviewers to Caesar's commentaries.[20] Plutarch may have felt confirmed in his generic identification by similarities between Sulla's memoirs and Caesar's writings.[21] In sum, Sulla's autobiography incorporated features that, for later readers at least (and certainly for a Greek reader), could mark it as a specimen of *commentarii* even if, as seems likely, its title did not incorporate the term.[22]

We can hardly attempt to recover Sulla's style or the degree of his literariness from our meager selection of fragments and paraphrases. It may be unwise to infer a basic account owing to the haste of its composition, and it should be obvious that Sulla's deferential dedication to Lucullus, which may owe itself to generic expectations, is itself something of a feint and hardly an admission of literary ineptitude. Sulla, after all, was erudite.[23] Military narrative—in unmistakable service to Sulla's triumphant self-fashioning—dominated the memoirs, offering rich possibilities for arresting and patriotic storytelling. Sulla included detailed depictions of combat, including scenes of individual heroism on the part of his soldiers (F12P = Plut., *Sull.* 14.1–3) and less elevated if historically urgent particulars like specific dates and casualty figures (F15P; F19P = Plut., *Sull.* 19.7–9; 28.15). He also supplied relevant topographical excursions (F14P = Plut., *Sull.* 16.1). The evidence of Plutarch and Appian suggests

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[20] On the ostensibly provisional nature of *commentarii*, see G. Misch, *Autbiography*, 237–238; Scholz, "Sullas *commentarii*," 179–180; A.M. Riggsby, *Caesar in Gaul and Rome* (Austin, 2006), 136–137. On reactions to Caesar's *commentarii*, see Cic., *Brut.* 262; Hirtius, *B.Gall.* 8. *praef.*; cf. the rough and unfinished style of (at least some) Greek *hymomnemata*: Plut., *Arat.* 3.3 (the case of Aratus' influential memoirs).

[21] Scholz, "Sullas *commentarii*," 180.

[22] On controversies over the definition and generic expectations of *commentarii*, see Riggsby, *Caesar in Gaul*, 133–155 with further references.

[23] Sall., *Iug.* 45.2: Sulla is *litteris Graecis et Latinis iuxta atque doctissime eruditus*. Sulla's deference to Lucullus is sometimes taken literally, e.g., Behr, *Selbstdarstellung Sullas*, 16.

speeches in direct discourse—often melodramatic, but in any case symptomatic of an ambitious register—as well as embedded epistolography.[24] If Lewis is correct in suggesting that Sulla claimed credit for raising his family's fallen fortunes, then he will have appropriated a central theme of Aemilius Scaurus' autobiography (and in doing so configured himself as a super-Scaurus excelling his predecessor, whose widow Sulla had married).[25] Similarly, Sulla (we can be sure) exploited Catulus' rewriting of Marius' northern campaigns in 102 (an exercise that promoted Catulus' contribution to victory at the expense of Marius). In this way Sulla could, in recounting his military service as Catulus' legate, minimize his earlier connection to Marius (Sulla had been Marius' quaestor, which for Roman sensibilities constituted a relationship of enduring loyalty) and advertise his own early martial successes (F4P, F5P, F6P = Plut., *Sull.* 4.1–4; Plut. *Mar.* 25.6–7; *Mar.* 26.3–7). Sulla's memoir, in sum, aimed to become the consummate memoir, a comprehensive and totalizing account of his aristocratic preeminence, itself demonstrated along traditional lines in military glory and devotion to the Republic, and, more remarkably, in the abiding favor of the gods.[26]

Self-exculpation, in matters small and large, also characterized Sulla's autobiography.[27] He explained his failure in the praetorian elections of 98 by adducing a popular passion to see him stand for the aedileship (F7P = Plut., *Sull.* 5.1–3), a claim, as Plutarch observed, that was refuted by subsequent events (Sulla was elected praetor in the next year). Blemishes of a far more serious quality also obtruded: the rupture of Sulla's relationship with Marius, his military occupation of Rome during his first consulship, the disreputable conditions of the Peace of Dardanus and, most conspicuous of all, the civil war and its subsequent proscriptions. But in recalling these events, Sulla's focus was not exclusively or even primarily apologetic. In his version of these aspects of his career Sulla predictably casts himself by turns as aggrieved and redemptive, the savior of the Republic.

As Marius' chosen quaestor and lieutenant, Sulla was liable to accusations of ingratitude and betrayal—allegations he sought to staunch by portraying his former master as an envious egoist—hence his appropriation of Catulus' memoirs, deployment of an existing source that

[24] Behr, *Selbstdarstellung Sullas*, 9–15.

[25] Lewis, *Athenaeum* 79 (1991), 512–513; cf. Scholz, "'Sullas *commentarii*,'" 181.

[26] Sulla's aristocratic superiority in his memoirs: Scholz, "Sullas *commentarii*," 184, 190–191.

[27] Scholz, "Sullas *commentarii*," 177; Behr, *Selbsdarstellung Sullas*, 12–13.

enhanced the dictator's credibility and authority. Into Catulus' narrative Sulla insinuated evidence of divine disapproval of Marius (F6P = Plut., *Mar*. 26.3–7), an element that participated in the work's comprehensive representation of Sulla as the darling of fortune (by contrast, Catulus' account seems to have focused on the stamina and courage of his legions: cf. *Mar*. 26.7).[28] It was not always necessary for Sulla to concoct new events. In a well-known episode from his first consulate, Sulla, harassed by the thugs of Sulpicius Rufus (tr. pl. 88), took refuge in the house of Marius, who assisted in Sulla's escape by showing him an alternative and unnoticed exit. Thereupon Sulla fled Rome. That, at least, was the hostile account of this event. In his own version, however, Sulla was not escaping Sulpicius' gangs. Instead, in the heat of political strife between himself and Sulpicius, he elected to consult with Marius in the man's own home, a gesture of political compromise. Sulpicius' supporters threatened the consul, but he did not flinch: he returned to the forum, where he endeavored peacefully to accommodate the radical tribune (F11P = Plut., *Mar*. 35.4; cf. App., *B. Civ*. 1.56). Now whether Sulla's actions at this time were high-minded or motivated by an anxiety that he was outmatched by the combination of Marius and Sulpicius is probably irrecoverable. But it must be admitted that Sulla's account strikes the reader as somewhat more plausible than the version put forward by his enemies, which stressed Sulla's indebtedness to Marius' sense of *noblesse oblige*.[29] The entire episode, as Sulla tells it, emphasized instead his personal courage and his civic responsibility. Sulla, then, on his own account, can hardly be said to have failed in his personal obligations to Marius. It is instead Marius who proved wanting as a mentor and as a friend—and certainly as a citizen of the Republic. By contrast, that Sulla knew better how to cultivate a quaestor was inscribed into the dedication of the autobiography, if, as it has plausibly been proposed, Lucullus was Sulla's quaestor in 88.[30]

The decision to march on Rome in 88—an enormity of lasting historical significance—was evidently much elaborated in Sulla's treatment. Despite the enthusiasm of his soldiers and the cooperation of his consular

[28] Calabi, *MAL* 8 (1950), 266, argues that this material did not originate in Sulla's autobiography.

[29] Appian's concise reference to Sulla's "pretext of making consultations" (*B. Civ*. 1.56: *hos bouleusomenos*) indicates familiarity with Sulla's account, pace Calabi, *MAL* 8 (1950), 281. There is no reason to believe that Sulla fled Rome. On the likely nature of the negotiations between Marius and Sulla at this time, see Seager, *CAH*, 169–170.

[30] Badian, *Studies*, 220.

colleague, Sulla shrank from the undertaking—as Caesar would on the eve of his civil war—hesitation that naturally directed the reader's attention to Sulla's motivations. And, like Caesar, Sulla's resolve was stiffened by a dream (a Cappadocian goddess of war, identified with Roman Bellona, placed a thunderbolt in his hand and with it he vanquished his enemies).[31] Divine approbation was also announced by Sulla's personal soothsayer, Postumius, whose extispicy predicted victory.[32] Sulla does not disguise the reality that his march on Rome was intended to punish his personal enemies: that is explicit in his dream.[33] But the religious apparatus that finally actuates his momentous occupation of the city elevates Sulla's actions beyond mere personal animosity and vengeance.

Throughout his work Sulla underscored the importance of dreams and portents (their significance is introduced in the work's dedication), all of which operate in the memoirs to fashion Sulla as an agent of the gods whose destiny was to rescue Rome from its enemies, foreign and domestic (and thus Sulla's enemies are always the enemies of the Republic, thereby blending his personal animosities with civic duty).[34] Even in his battle narratives, Sulla makes it plain that victory owes itself as much to the gods—a reality expressed by Sulla's *felicitas*—as it does to his martial greatness (itself much in evidence as well). Indeed, by means of his ready reactions to divine promptings, Sulla insists, he found greater successes than those arrived at by careful deliberation. As he put in his memoirs, "he was born with a nature more suited for Fortune than for war" (Plut., *Sull.* 6.9). Thus Sulla emerges in the autobiography as the devout and enthusiastic instrument of the gods—the man

[31] Plut., *Sull.* 9.4. It is generally accepted that this story derives from Sulla's memoirs: e.g., Valgilio, *StudUrb* 49 (1975), 267; A. Keaveney, "Sulla and the Gods," in *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History*, ed. C. Deroux, 3 (Brussels, 1983), 65–66; Behr, *Selbstdarstellung Sullas*, 74. Calabi, *MAL* 8 (1950), 269, however, sees it differently.

[32] Plut., *Sull.* 9.6. Unless Plutarch has displaced this episode (the opinion of M. Chassignet, *L'Annalistique Romaine*, 3 [Paris, 2004], 243), Postumius' was something of a repeat performance in the memoirs: Cicero found in Sulla's account of the Social War a notice that Postumius had foretold Sullan victory (on a more modest scale) at that time: Cic., *Div.* 1.72. Matters are muddled in Val. Max. 1.6.4, who sets the event in the Social War but designates Sulla consul. Livy (*ap.* Aug., *De Civ. D.* 2.24) also recorded a Postumian extispicy at the time of Sulla's first march on Rome.

[33] Note also the emphasis on his opponents' *hybris* at App., *B. Civ.* 1.57.

[34] E.g., F8P, F16P, F18P, F21P, F10AP = Plut., *Sull.* 6.7–13, 17.2–4, 27.11–12, 13.1–3; *An seni* 6. This theme pervades Plutarch's entire biography of Sulla: e.g., Keaveney, "Sulla and the Gods"; Schulz, "Sullas *commentarii*," 182, 191–193; Behr, *Selbstdarstellung Sullas*, 18–21.

through whom they preserve the Republic—a status that absolves him of dishonorable intentions or criminal behavior, and that renders resistance to Sulla at once futile and impious.

Sulla's destiny was revealed to him before the crisis of 88. While proconsul in Cappadocia, so he claimed, Sulla encountered a Chaldaean who, by means of his own physiognomic practices, detected Sulla's superiority and future greatness (*Sull.* 5.11). Sulla recorded a similar though more spectacular incident in his narrative of the Social War (F8P = Plut., *Sull* 6.7–13). Near Laverna a great chasm opened, out of which came fire and a single bright flame that reached up to the sky, a token, he was assured by soothsayers, that a man of great capacities and striking appearance would take upon himself the government of Rome and free his city from its misfortune.[35] Sulla was not too shy to identify himself as this stunning savior. This supernatural reinforcement, Sulla's *felicitas*, on the basis of which he eventually claimed the honorific name *Felix*, was plainly a central theme of his autobiography, emphasizing again and again the dictator's salutary inevitability.[36]

To return to his first march on Rome, it was not enough for Sulla to smite his enemies: they must also be the enemies of the Republic. When asked by envoys of the senate to explain his actions in bringing an army against his own city, Sulla (according to Appian who is probably relying on Sulla's own account) replied, " 'in order to liberate her from tyrants' " (*B. Civ.* 1.57). What, one wonders, was Sulla's Latin here? Did he set himself against Marian *regnum*, the ambition to assume monarchical (and therefore forbidden) autocratic power? Or did he claim to advance on Rome "in order to restore freedom to the Roman people, who were oppressed by a coalition of a few powerful men," thereby exploiting a theme of civil strife that would extend itself through the late Republic to Caesar and to Augustus—and beyond? Whatever his precise formulation, it will be obvious how Sulla portrayed his opponents: their hostility toward Sulla is of a piece with their determination to undermine the Republic.[37]

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[35] For the reading *Laverna* here, see Chassignet, *Annalistique Romain*, 243.

[36] On the (not uncomplicated) significations of *felix* and *felicitas*, J.P.V.D. Balsdon, "Sulla Felix," *JRS* 41 (1951), 1–10 remains fundamental. See also Behr, *Selbstdarstellung Sullas*, 144–170; F. Santangelo, *Sulla, the Elites and the Empire: A Study of Roman Policies in Italy and the Greeks* (Leiden, 2007), 199–223, each with further references.

[37] Consider the examples of Caesar and Augustus: Caes., *B. Civ.* 1.22: … *populum Romanum factione paucorum oppressum in libertatem vindicaret*; Aug., *Res. Ges.*1.1: *exercitum … comparavi, per quem rem publicam a dominatione factionis oppresam in*

The agent of destiny, yes, but Sulla is neither hapless nor passive. He is patriotic and courageous, characterizations that are never eclipsed by his insuperable *felicitas*. During his first attack on Rome, the fortitude of his soldiers nearly flagged when they were opposed by the Marians. Sulla, however, seized a standard and through his own singular bravery rallied his troops (*B. Civ.* 1.58), a bold display that he replicated during the Mithridatic War at the Battle of Orchomenus (Plut., *Sull.* 21.3).[38] Even amid the rout of the left wing at the Battle of Colline Gate, Sulla at once took to task the god Apollo, who seemed to be shirking his duty to Sulla the Fortunate, as well as his troops, whose retreat he struggled to halt (Plut., *Sull.* 29.12–14) unaware that his lieutenant, Marcus Crassus, in command of the right wing, had won a stunning victory.[39]

Apologetics by way of a pose of Roman grandeur are evident in Sulla's account of the Peace of Dardanus and his decision to invade Italy. In the thick of his prosecution of the war against Mithridates, Sulla became the refuge for distinguished citizens endeavoring to escape Cinna and Carbo. Soon even his wife, Metella, with her children fled to Sulla. His properties, she reported, had been destroyed by his enemies, and she begged her husband to rescue the city. Sulla, for his part, was torn: how could he save Rome without failing in his duty in the Mithridatic War (Plut., *Sull.* 22.2–3)? His felicity resolved his uncertainty: representatives of the king soon appeared, who offered not merely to come to favorable terms but even to assist Sulla in his war on Rome. Here Sulla emphasized his consummate patriotism by configuring himself as a potential Coriolanus: driven into exile by spiteful foes, he might well have marched on Rome in command of foreign troops. But this possibility is raised only to be rejected in the most vigorous of terms. Sulla goes on to play the Roman conqueror, imposing on Mithridates what is represented as a firm peace, ornamented with imperialist dictates, and only thereafter does he lead his army back to Rome—again to liberate the city and not to threaten it with ruin.[40]

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libertatem vindicavi. Variations on *vindex liberatis* abound in the late Republic: C. Wirszubski, *Libertas as a Political Idea at Rome during the Late Republic and Early Principate* (Cambridge, 1950), 100–106.

[38] Caesar displayed (and advertised) similar conduct: Caes., *B. Civ.* 3.69.4; cf. Suet., *Iul.* 62; Plut., *Caes.* 39.2, 52.3; App., *B. Civ.* 2.95; Val. Max. 3.2.19.

[39] On the importance of Apollo for Sulla, see Keaveney, "Sulla and the Gods," 56–60. Sulla associated Apollo with freedom in the imagery of his coinage: M.H. Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage*, 1 (Cambridge, 1974), 387–388. Hence his importance in Sulla's ultimate occupation of Rome.

[40] Sulla strikes the correct Roman posture: Plut., *Sull.* 22–24. The story of Metella's plea derives from Sulla: Calabi, *MAL* 8 (1950), 291–292; Badian, *Studies*, 210.

We would be in a better position to gauge the contemporary political impact of Sulla's autobiography if we knew more about its promulgation.[41] Were earlier books circulated, if only informally? Or did Sulla intend to unveil his work *in toto*, perhaps in the year 78? It is obvious how Sulla's embrace of the literary legacy of the consul of 102 would underline his support of Catulus's consulship, and beginning in its very dedication the work inscribes the importance and the advantages of continued loyalty to Sulla. It is also obvious how Sulla's memoirs exhibit to their readers the consequences of resisting their author, who preserved the muscular backing of the gods. At a practical level, Sulla's recurring emphasis on the powerful bond between himself and his soldiers could hardly fail to remind readers of the numerous colonists, beholden and available to Sulla, who populated the Italian countryside.[42] In sum, the memoirs constituted unmistakable proof of Sulla's righteous clout—and his willingness to exercise it. This is not to suggest that Sulla did not wish to persuade posterity of his virtue—of course he did—but the contemporary focus of his memoirs is unmistakable.[43] Glory was a crucial component of political power, and, to the extent that the claims of Sulla's autobiography went uncontested by contemporary readers, its author could exalt and benefit from the public's acquiescence in his assertions of superiority.

We come now to the most difficult and controversial fragment of Sulla's autobiography, supplied by Gellius in his examination of a question of correct Latin usage:

> L. Sulla, in the second book of his *Autobiography*: But if it is possible that even now you happen to think of me and if you believe that I am more worthy of treatment as a fellow citizen than as an enemy and that I fight for you and not against you, this will be the state of affairs for me not because of my own or my ancestors' services. (F3P = Gell. 20.6.3)

Explanations of this passage proliferate, and none is wholly satisfactory. It is difficult to find a convincing context in which these lines could have been uttered by any actor in the memoirs apart from their author, and their appearance in Book 2 is perplexing (they would be easier to understand if situated in the work's opening or in a speech delivered later in the course of Sulla's career). It is objected that Sulla could hardly have gainsaid his own merits, in reaction to which Madvig, in a still widely accepted emendation, altered the sense of the above translation to

[41] Scholz, "Sullas *commentarii*," 175 n. 13.
[42] Sulla and his soldiers in the memoirs: Behr, *Die Selbstdarstellung Sullas*, esp. 54–56.
[43] A very different view is offered by Scholz, "Sullas *commentarii*," 186–188.

"... this will be the state of affairs for me because of my own and my ancestors' services." But it is far obvious that the text is defective. It may well be, as Lewis proposes, that Sulla went on to offer an alternative recommendation for himself: his *felicitas*.[44] In a speculative but stimulating suggestion, Lewis has proposed that this excerpt was part of a second preface to the work, a transition from the introductory material of Book 1 (the work's dedication and the rehearsal of the history of the Cornelii) to the autobiography *stricto sensu*. If Lewis is correct, the immediacy of the Sulla's memoirs was unmistakably foregrounded by "even now" (*nunc etiam*), and the second preface emphasized the central themes of the autobiography as a whole, including (if the preface went on to invoke Sulla's *felicitas*) its author's divine selection as the champion of Rome's citizens.

Sulla's memoirs—like the multitude of his freedmen and veterans—emphasized Sullan power and its persistence even beyond the terms of his magistracies. Despite his past personal supremacy, not all of Sulla's enemies were daunted in 79, and the claims of his autobiography remained part of a larger and ongoing political contest. Posterity relished his account for different reasons: his was an essential narrative of the Mithridatic War and of the civil war that supervened. It was not a version that redeemed its author, however. Within a generation, Sulla had become a byword for violence and tyranny.[45]

Lucius Licinius Lucullus and Lucius Aurunculeius Cotta

Sulla's dedication notwithstanding, there is no hint that Lucullus composed a history of the period covered by Sulla's memoirs.[46] Had he done so, of course, he should have had abundant opportunities for self-glorification, as he narrated his own exertions in behalf of Sulla's conception of the Republic. At some point in his youth Lucullus penned a Greek history of the Social War (Plut., *Luc*. 1.7; cf. Cic., *Att*. 1.19.10) in which he

[44] Attempts to deal with this passage are summarized by Chassignet, *Annalistique Romaine*, 241, to which add Smith, "Sulla's *Memoirs*," 67–68. Lewis' suggestion is discussed in *Athenaeum* 69 (1991), 509–517.

[45] Illustrated in detail by S. Lanciotti, "Silla e la tipologia del tiranno nella letteratura Latina repubblicana," *Quaderni di Storia antica* 3 (1977), 129–153; *Quaderni di Storia antica* 4 (1978), 191–225.

[46] It has nevertheless been suggested that Lucullus composed memoirs, e.g., T. Frank, *Life and Literature in the Roman Republic* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1965), 169; P.G. Walsh, *Livy* (Cambridge, 1967), 136.

may have elaborated his early martial accomplishments. Plutarch knows of them, even if he neglects to report them (Plut., *Luc.* 2.1: Plutarch's account of Lucullus' career instead commences with his service to Sulla). As for his command against Mithridates, that story was not told by Lucullus himself. For those matters, Plutarch turned to Sallust and, possibly, to an epic poem, in Greek, by Archias that celebrated the eastern conquests of Lucullus.[47]

We possess only a single reference to a work by L. Aurunculeius Cotta, one of Caesar's legates during the Gallic wars: according to Athenaeus (Athen. 6.273B), Cotta specified that, during his invasion of Britain, Caesar was accompanied by a personal retinue of only three slaves, a fact which Athenaeus adduces as an instance of old-fashioned Roman moderation. The composition by Cotta mined by Athenaeus is described as an essay on the Roman constitution. Perhaps, then, Cotta's information about Caesar appeared in a moralizing disquisition about Roman virtues and their past and present actualizations (much like the context in which Cotta appears in Athenaeus), in which case Cotta's work lies outside the range of historiography altogether. It is, however, just possible that Cotta exerted himself to compose a history that dealt with Caesar's invasion of Britain. This theme was, after all, a glamorous one for Caesar's contemporaries: it was echoed in the verses of Catullus, and more than one poet delivered an epic on the subject. Even the brothers Cicero contemplated (though neither completed) an epic poem in celebration of Caesar's campaign.[48] It is possible that Cotta was himself a participant, exposure that would have given his narrative an opportunity to fashion its author as suitably courageous and dutiful.[49] But all of this must remain speculation. In any case, it is obvious that Cotta took pains to flatter his commander, exertion that cannot have displeased Caesar, whose own account of Cotta's death fighting Ambiorix stresses his legate's virtue, loyalty, and good sense (Caes., *B. Gall.* 5.24–37).

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[47] On Sallust, see H. Peter, *Die Quellen Plutarchs in den Biographieen der Römer* (Halle, 1865), 106–107. On Archias, see T.W. Hillard, "Plutarch's Late-Republican Lives: Between the Lines," *Antichthon* 21 (1987), 40–43.

[48] Cat. 11. On epics celebrating Caesar's campaign, see E. Courtney, *The Fragmentary Latin Poets* (Oxford, 1993), 195–200, 238; A.S. Hollis, *Fragments of Roman Poetry, c. 60 BC–AD 20* (Oxford, 2007), 119–121, 128–135, 165–166, 179–180. On the brothers Cicero, see *QF* 2.16.4, 3.4.4, 3.5.4, 3.7.7.

[49] For sources for Cotta's career, see Broughton, *MRR*, 2.225.

Cicero

Few Romans displayed more diligence in self-fashioning than did Cicero, who, as we saw at the beginning of this chapter, was not inclined to neglect biography—or autobiography.[50] At the end of his consulship, taking a page from the autobiographical efforts of earlier Romans, he crafted a public letter, no longer extant, addressed to Pompey, in which he advertised the successes of the *annus mirabilis* (Cic., *Sull.* 67; cf. *Fam.* 5.7). The motivation of personal pride is too obvious to require extended comment. A more immediate stimulus, however, will have been the attacks of the tribune (and kinsman of Pompey) Metellus Nepos, the first to impugn the constitutionality of Cicero's execution of the captured Catilinarian conspirators.[51] Predictably, Cicero identified his (now controversial) actions with the requirements of the Republic (cf. Cic., *Sull.* 67: the letter dealt *de meis rebus gestis et de summa re publica*). But some found it boastful (*Schol. Bob.* 167.22–30 St.), and Pompey responded so coolly that that the letter remained a source of embarrassment for its author (it was raised against him as late as 55: Cic., *Planc.* 85). In the end, Pompey embraced Cicero's version of the events of 63 (Cic., *Att.* 1.19.7, written in 60), an endorsement that Cicero viewed as healthy for the Republic not least because it enhanced, or so he believed, his own political security. In Cicero's career, then, it becomes very clear how strong are the links between a senator's recognized glory, his political authority, and the narrative that establishes the foundation of both. Hence multiple repetitions of the defeat of Catiline in Cicero's speeches and his numerous attempts to record his account in more than one genre.[52]

Cicero, of course, turned to others. We have seen already his approach to Lucceius. Long before that, however, Cicero had attempted to win, as the fee for his defense of the man, an epic poem from the Greek poet Archias. Although the poem never eventuated (Cic., *Att.* 1.16.15), Cicero's speech for Archias nevertheless exhibits for us what were undoubtedly normative Roman views of the importance of fame for a mem-

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[50] J. Dugan, *Making a New Man: Ciceronian Self-Fashioning in the Rhetorical Works* (Oxford, 2005). See also Baier, "Autobiographie in der späten römischen Republik," 128–134.

[51] On Nepos' hostility to Cicero, see Broughton, *MRR*, 2.174.

[52] On the events of Cicero's consulship and his career after his consulship, see T.N. Mitchell, *Cicero: The Senior Statesman* (New Haven, 1991); T.P. Wiseman, "The Senate and the *populares*," in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, eds. J.A. Crook, A. Lintott, and E. Rawson, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 1994), 9:346–358, each with further references.

ber of the aristocracy: again and again the orator stresses the appropriateness of a statesman's *studium laudis* and *amor gloriae*, the gratification of which celebrates not only great citizens but also the Roman people (e.g. Cic., *Arch*. 26, 28, 30–31). Frustrated by Archias, Cicero instead elected to publicize his merits on his own—in Greek prose.

Cicero composed a Greek memoir entitled *On My Consulship*, a work later mined by Plutarch and by Dio (e.g. Plut., *Crass*. 13.4; *Caes*. 8.4; *Cic*. 15.1–3; Dio 46.2.4). In 60 Atticus received a copy for his review and revision. The effort was highly stylized, which we learn from Cicero's comparison of his memoir with Atticus' more austere account of the same material (Cic., *Att*. 2.1.1–2: Atticus' work was published; cf. Nepos, *Att*. 18.6). Cicero pressed Atticus to promulgate *On My Consulship* widely (Cic., *Att*. 1.20.6, 2.1.1–2). He himself had sent it to Posidonius in the hope, ultimately unrealized, of acquiring literary treatment from Greece's preeminent historian (*ibid*.). A Latin version was contemplated (Cic., *Att*. 1.19.10) but, so far as we know, never written (it had not been attempted by 55: Cic., *Fam*. 5.12.8). A Greek version of Cicero's consulship hardly requires explanation. The language was available to senatorial historians and readers, and it offered the added benefit of influencing a Greek audience, for whom a political memoir wanting in military grandeur may have held an appeal lost on Roman readers. It was only after Cicero had experienced exile and restoration, a plot with ample Roman antecedents, that his story possessed an appeal dramatic enough to tempt, or so he hoped, a Roman historian to record it: only after 55, as we have seen, did Cicero approach Lucceius.

The Catilinarian conspiracy will have been the focus of Cicero's memoir, but it is possible that other successes were also included. For instance, it has been proposed that Cicero's reconciliation of the people with Lucius Roscius Otho, adduced by Plutarch as evidence for the force of Cicero's eloquence (*Cic*. 13), was an episode in this work.[53] There is no reason to suppose that *On My Consulship* was hostile to Crassus or to Caesar, or that it in any way implicated either in the machinations of Catiline or his associates. By the end of 62, after all, it was possible to attack Cicero as a menace to society for his destructive disclosures of others' complicity in the conspiracy, and it is unlikely that, in commemorating Rome's deliverance under his leadership, he wanted any distraction from his central achievement.[54] Instead, self-exculpation by way of glorious

[53] E. Rawson, *Roman Culture and Society* (Oxford, 1991), 413.

[54] On Cicero's disclosures as a measure of his excessive clout, see Cic., *Sull*. 21. At

representation of the protagonist as the enabler and executive of senatorial prestige will have consumed the bulk of Cicero's exposition, culminating in the legitimate execution of the captive conspirators and Cicero's acclamation as *parens patriae*.

Let down by Archias, Cicero composed his own epic account of the events of 63, the *De Consulato Suo*. The poem is adumbrated in March 60 (Cic., *Att*. 1.19.10), and by December of the same year Cicero can quote from its third (and final) book (*Att*. 2.3.4), in this instance a speech addressed to Cicero by the muse Calliope. This passage, like the book in which it was set, teemed with aristocratic pronouncements, according to its author, and Cicero represents it as constituting something of a moral manifesto (*Calliope ipsa praescripsit*). All the conventional accoutrements of epic were in evidence in Cicero's poem: there were signs and portents (Serv., *Ecl*. 8.105), Minerva acted as Cicero's divine patron (Quint. 11.1.24), Calliope's instruction we have seen already, and there was a council of the gods at which Cicero was present (Quint. 11.1.24).[55] What was missing, however, was the martial action suitable to epic adventure, a reality emphasized in the poem's notorious line: *cedant arma togae, concedat laurea laudi*. The poem seems not to have been faulty in terms of versification or literariness—indeed, both Virgil and Horace could appropriate elements from it—but the divine machinery applied to recent events, unlike the evidently authentic religiosity reflected in Sulla's dreams and omens, was clunky if not downright unseemly, and it attracted ridicule especially when given a tendentiously literal interpretation.[56] Just as effective, however, was the assertion that Cicero's apparent repudiation of military glory was inappropriate and offensive to a real Roman hero like Pompey, an accusation that Cicero felt obliged to refute in the senate and which continued to roil his detractors (Cic., *Pis*. 72–75;

Plut., *Crass*. 13, Plutarch reports that Cicero implicated Crassus and Caesar in the Catilinarian conspiracy in a *logos* published after his death; he then goes on to refer to *On My Consulship*. The *logos* in question is almost certainly Cicero's *Expositio Consiliorum Suorum* (see below), pace Rawson, *Roman Culture and Society*, 409. In any case, the inculpation has nothing to do with *On My Consulship*.

[55] Courtney, *The Fragmentary Latin Poets*, 156–173; Kurczyk, *Cicero und die Inszenierung der eigenen Vergangenheit*, 75–103, each with further references.

[56] On Virgil and Horace, see Serv., *Ecl*. 8.105; Hor., *Epist*. 2.1.256. On epic conventions, see, e.g., Ps.-Sall., *In Cic*. 3–7; Cicero responds to such criticism: *Dom*. 92 (from Clodius); cf. Cicero's gentle rebuke of his brother for excessive literalism in reading the divine machinery of his epic at *Div*. 2.45–48. By contrast, Archias' epic account of Lucullus' eastern conquests, which also incorporated the divine conventions of epic (Hillard, *Antichthon* 21 [1987], 41), is not known to have attracted criticism.

Phil. 2.20; cf. *Off.* 1.77–78).[57] This does not mean that the poem was a failure as a specimen of autobiography. Its prolonged existence as a site of political contest is evidence of its vitality ("the only thing worse than being talked about," as Oscar Wilde put it, "is not being talked about"): Cicero continued to cite this poem, in the teeth of criticism, as late as 44 (*Off.* 1.77), and in the same year he could praise his composition (while repulsing Antony's animadversions) as supplying a useful model to the young and a source of glory to Rome (*Phil.* 2.20). Its controversies did not deter him from a second autobiographical epic.

By late 56 Cicero had begun his *De Temporibus Suis* (*On His Own Tribulations*), an account of his exile and restoration.[58] The epic was ultimately completed in three books, each of which appeared in succession in 54. No fragments of this poem survive, but Cicero's own references make it clear that once again he deployed the conventional machinery of epic verse, including a council of the gods. Naturally, Cicero will not have failed to record his own merits, but in this text his principal object seems to have been to praise the loyalty and helpfulness of his supporters, and to display (but not overly harshly) the perfidy of his enemies (Cic., *Fam.* 1.9.23). He certainly celebrated the assistance he had received from Cn. Plancius (Cic., *Planc.* 74), and a principal figure in the tale of his restoration was P. Lentulus Spinther (cos. 57), to whom Cicero delivered a personal copy (*Fam.* 1.9.23). How Pompey was treated cannot be recovered, though in the aftermath of Cicero's return it was he who received the greatest share of Cicero's public gratitude. Caesar Cicero apparently treated with sufficient tact: he was bold enough, after all, to solicit his reactions to the first book, parts of which the proconsul praised and parts of which he deemed flat. Cicero urged his brother to discover whether Caesar's disapproval stemmed from the work's style or content (Cic., *QF* 2.16.5). Although the Greek word actually used by Caesar in his criticism was a stylistic term (*rhaithumotera*), Cicero perhaps had some reason to fret owing to his treatment of L. Calpurnius Piso (cos. 58), Caesar's father-in-law but also Cicero's bitter enemy (as an ally of Clodius, Piso had played an undeniable role in the orchestration of Cicero's exile). It was not possible for Cicero to treat him gently—he had already lacerated

[57] S.M. Goldberg, *Epic in Republican Rome* (Oxford, 1995), 135–157.

[58] S.J. Harrison, "Cicero's *De temporibus suis*: The Evidence Reconsidered," *Hermes* 118 (1990), 455–463; Kurczyk, *Cicero und die Inszenierung der eigenen Vergangenheit*, 103–115; Courtney, *Fragmentary Latin Poets*, 173–174. On the events and politics of Cicero's exile and restoration, see W.J. Tatum, *The Patrician Tribune: Publius Clodius Pulcher* (Chapel Hill, 1999), 150–187 with further references.

the man in two public speeches (*Prov. cons.* and *Pis.*)—but he plainly did not want to spoil his improving relationship with Caesar. In any case, we need not believe he went so far as to include an episode in which Jupiter foretold Piso's (alleged) failure in Macedonia, even if he contemplated such a scene when writing to Quintus (*QF* 3.1.24).

And finally we come to the most fascinating of Cicero's autobiographical enterprises, and the one the loss of which we have greatest cause to regret. In 59, when Cicero was menaced by the prospect of the looming tribunate of his enemy, Clodius, recently transformed from patrician to plebeian (through the assistance of Pompey and Caesar), he retired to his country estates, where he devoted himself to literary composition.[59] He confided in Atticus that he contemplated composing a secret history, savage in the vein of Theopompus, or perhaps even more so. In it he could express his hatred for wicked men who were wrecking the state, by whom he no doubt meant the triumvirs, their supporters—and Clodius (Cic., *Att.* 2.6.2; cf. 2.8.1). The project recurs again, much later, in 44, when Cicero announces to Atticus that he is in the final revisions of this work: Caesar is an intended target (Cic., *Att.* 14.17.6). It seems highly likely that the book was released shortly after the publication of the *Philippics*, but certainty on that point is impossible (Cic., *Att.* 16.11.3).[60] According to Dio (39.10.2–3), the work was sealed and delivered to Cicero's son to be read only after its author's decease, and that may once have been the work's intention (unless the pose is a conceit exploiting the Roman notion that a man is nowhere more honest than in his posthumously revealed sentiments, for instance and most notably, in his will).[61] Asconius (86C) delivers the title of the work, *Expositio Consiliorum Suorum* (*An Accounting of His Political Deliberations*). Asconius and Dio agree that the work contained much unfavorable comment on Crassus and Caesar.[62] This specimen of autobiography was aimed, more obviously than in the case of others, at posterity and, in combination with its animus, must have imported an ample supply of *apologia*. But even in the instance of a work such as this, oriented toward the long view, its potential for an immediate political effect may have proved too strong to postpone its publication. In the *Expositio*, Crassus and Caesar resisted Cicero's election to the consul-

[59] Tatum, *The Patrician Tribune*, 102–111.

[60] K. Büchner, *RE* 7A.1268.

[61] E. Champlin, *Final Judgments: Duty and Emotion in Roman Wills, 200 B.C.–A.D. 250* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1991), 6–21.

[62] This work, however, did not limit itself to invective; cf. Rawson, *Roman Culture and Society*, 409–415.

ship and plotted with Catiline to overthrow the Republic (Asc. 83C; Plut., *Crass*. 13.4), all of which, one can be sure, prefigured their subsequent contempt for the constitution, itself culminating in Caesar's dictatorship. It is clear from the *Philippics* how Cicero constructed Antony as a continuation of Catiline and Clodius—and as a continuation of the worst excesses of Caesar's autocracy.[63] To the degree Cicero's *Expositio* denigrated Anthony, it will have pleased Octavian—though only to a point. Its treatment of Caesar can only have rankled. Nevertheless, as was the case in Sulla's memoirs, the central figure of the *Expositio* will have been its author, who will have been represented as consistently struggling for the rescue of the Republic—against enemies who got what was coming to them, as would all enemies of the Republic (or so Cicero hoped in 44).

Varro

The prolific Marcus Terentius Varro furnished his contemporaries with more than one account of his own career: the *Legationum Libri III* (*Three Books Recounting His Services as Legate*) and the *De Vita Sua* (*On His Own Life*), also in three books. Neither survives (the only subsisting citation from the *De Vita Sua* is provided by Charisius: *GLK* 1.89.28). It is all too easy to forget that the great scholar and polymath, originating in relative obscurity, rose in senatorial politics largely by way of creditable military service, most of which took place under the command of Pompey.[64] Varro campaigned with Pompey in the Sertorian War, and he was an important legate in the Pirate War, during which his service earned him the award of a *corona rostrata* (beaked crown) in recognition of his talents as a naval officer (Plin., *Nat. His*. 7.115, 16.7). At the time of the civil war, Varro was again Pompey's legate, this time in Farther Spain. Varro's military credentials, in combination with Pompey's formidable electoral clout, sufficed to elevate him, after a tribunate and aedileship, to a praetorship, the date of which remains uncertain. It is unknown when Varro elected to record the events of his military career, ignorance which impedes any attempt to infer the extent and purposes

[63] J.M. May, "Cicero and the Beasts," *Syllecta Classica* 7 (1996), 143–153.

[64] On Varro's career, see C. Cichorius, *Römische Studien* (Leipzig, 1922), 189–226 (emphasizing his origins in an equestrian branch of the Terentii Varrones); H. Dahlmann, *RE*, Suppl. 6 (1939), 1172–1278; cf. also E. Fantham, "Three Wise Men and the End of the Roman Republic," in *Caesar Against Liberty? Perspectives on his Autocracy*, eds. F. Cairns and E. Fantham (Chippenham, 2003), 109–117.

of his autobiographies. Martial success was always a commendation in Roman elections, and so one is tempted to view the *Legationum Libri* as a means of burnishing Varro's appeal by the time of his canvass for the praetorship. The same work, whenever it was composed, will also have allowed its author to advertise his friendship with Pompey, itself a recurring them in Varro's writings.[65]

Like Cicero, Varro joined the civil war on Pompey's side, and, again like Cicero, he eventually capitulated to Caesar. Both retired to literary pursuits during Caesar's dictatorship, and each was proscribed by the triumvirs who ultimately replaced Caesar. Varro, however, survived, and it was perhaps in this latest phase of his life that he perceived a need compose his *De Vita Sua*. It is not unlikely that Varro's subsequent autobiography recycled much of the same material, though his extended story will have entailed explaining his actions during the civil war. In his own account of Varro's conduct while legate in Spain, Caesar represents Varro as something of timeserver (Caes., *B. Civ*. 2.17–20). Varro's own account may have endeavored to explain how he balanced his loyalty to Pompey with his friendship with Caesar. If this autobiography was written after Varro's proscription and subsequent rehabilitation, its account of Varro's political—and apolitical—activities during and after the civil war may have been emphasized, perhaps by stressing Varro's devotion to study. Varro's scholarship remained more celebrated than his biographical writings, although if only owing to the stature of their author, Varro's autobiographies appear to have attracted the admiring attentions of the elder Pliny.[66]

Marcus Iunius Brutus and Quintus Dellius

Marcus Brutus, throughout his struggle with Anthony and Octavian, deployed multiple means of conveying his Republican sentiments and reinforcing his public image. Autobiography, however, was not one of them.[67] Brutus was keen on historiographical composition: he wrote

[65] Peter, *HRR*, 2:XXXVIIII.

[66] Varro's autobiographies: Cichorius, *Römische Studien*, 196–200; Dahlmann, *RE*, Suppl. 6 (1939), 1250–1251; M. Schanz and C. Hosius, *Geschichte der Römischen Literatur*, part 1 (Munich, 1961), 567. On Varro's influence on Pliny, see F. Della Corte, *Opuscula VIII* (Genoa, 1983), 173–185.

[67] Peter, *HRR*, 2:LXVI. On the events of Brutus' career after Caesar's assassination, see E. Rawson, "The Aftermath of the Ides," in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, eds. J.A. Crook, A. Lintott, and E. Rawson, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 1994), 9:468–490.

epitomes of the historians Lucius Coelius Antipater and Gaius Fannius that Cicero, for one, found easier to consult than the originals (Cic., *Att*. 13.8, *Att*. 12.5B). The epitome of Coelius was cited (on a matter of diction) as late as Charisius (2.220K = F2P). On the eve of Pharsalus he occupied himself by epitomizing Polybius (Plut. *Brut*. 4). Autobiography was superfluous for Brutus: already lionized by his contemporaries, he inspired literary treatment. The assassination of Caesar—the episode in Brutus' life that most of all required self-exculpation—was celebrated by Cicero and justified in the *Brutus* of Empylus of Rhodes (Plut., *Brut*. 2.3). His stepson, Lucius Calpurnius Bibulus, collected personal anecdotes, later published as a memoir of the man (Plut., *Brut*. 13.3, 23.7). The noblest of the Romans had no need, then, to exploit autobiography in order to influence contemporary politics, and toward posterity he could sustain a studied philosophical indifference, well aware that it would be recorded by others.

Quintus Dellius was conspicuously successful in negotiating the hazards of civil war. Emerging in service to Publius Cornelius Dolabella, he subsequently leapt from one side to another, finding employment and preference under Gaius Cassius, Mark Anthony and, ultimately, Octavian, thereby prompting a famous witticism from Mesalla Corvinus, who dubbed Dellius the *desultor bellorum civilium* (the horse-vaulting performer of the civil wars).[68] Dellius achieved prominence as a diplomat for Mark Anthony, not least in his early dealings with Cleopatra. His efforts as an emissary were undoubtedly aided by his sharp and celebrated wit (Sen., *Suas*. 1.7; Plut., *Ant*. 59). But Dellius also saw military service as a legate during Anthony's Parthian campaign as well as when raising troops before the Actium campaign.[69] On the eve of Actium, however, Dellius joined Octavian, bringing with him Anthony's battle plans (Vell. 2.84.2; Dio 50.23.1–3). Under the new regime he was much honored as an intimate of Augustus (Sen., *Clem*. 1.10.1), status reflected in the Horatian ode dedicated to him (*Carm*. 2.2).

Dellius composed a history of contemporary eastern affairs that included Anthony's Parthian war. Published in the aftermath of Actium, it will not have portrayed Anthony in a flattering light. Nor Cleopatra,

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[68] On Messalla's *bon mot*, see Sen., *Suas*. 1.7. On Dellius' career, see G. Wissowa, *RE* 4.2 (1903), 2447–2448.

[69] On his service as a legate in the Parthian War, see Strabo 11.13.3 = F1P. The text here is corrupt, and Dellius' presence reflects an (almost certain) emendation by Casaubon: cf. Peter, *HRR*, 2:53. On raising troops, see Dio 50.13.8.

though it is difficult to say with certainty whether Dellius' expressions of Cleopatra's hostility toward himself originated in his history or in another of his writings (he also composed the suggestively entitled *Epistulae ad Cleopatram Lasciviae*). Still, it is not implausible that Dellius' history included autobiographical elements self-exculpatory in nature and, perhaps, an account of his decision to abandon Anthony for Octavian, if, as has been suggested, Dellius' narrative extended itself to Actium. Dellius is certainly an important source for Plutarch's treatment of the Parthian War (Plutarch explicitly designates Dellius an historian at *Ant.* 59.6).[70]

Conclusion

The late Republic was characterized by intense and intensive literary activity on the part of its public figures, who sought to advance their reputations by publicizing their style, their erudition, and their accomplishments.[71] Autobiography was merely one aspect of this literary endeavor, and possibly a relatively narrow one. It is plain that autobiography aimed at influencing contemporaries at least as much as posterity. It is equally plain that the ideal subject of autobiographic composition was military achievement, which perhaps explains the overwhelming success of only one author of memoirs in this period, Sulla. Although Varro and Cicero excelled Sulla as literary types, their autobiographies lacked the military luster of their violent predecessor. In the late Republic, only Caesar could outshine Sulla.

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[70] For the contents and the extent of Dellius' history, see Peter, *HRR*, 2:LXVIII–LXXI; C. Pelling, *Plutarch and History* (London, 2002), 38–39, each with further references.

[71] C. Moatti, *La Raison de Rome: naissance de l'esprit critique à la fin de la République* (II^e^–I^er^ siècel avant J.-C.) (Paris, 1997); A. Eich, *Politische Literatur in der römischen Gesellschaft: Studien zum Verhältnis von politischer und literarischer Öffentlichkeit in der späten Republik und frühren Kaiserzeit* (Vienna, 2000).

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CHAPTER SIX

CAESAR AND THE *CORPUS CAESARIANUM*

Marc Mayer

By Way of Presentation

It is well known that the figure of Gaius Iulius Caesar is one that leaves nobody, not even those who are aware of just a few details about him, indifferent, and this enables us to say without exaggeration that even today he still arouses very contradictory sentiments.

In spite of their stated aim of impartiality, the authenticity of which cannot be doubted, historians and philologists have not always achieved their objective, and their sometimes very marked personal attitudes toward his figure, his career, and naturally his works, are reflected in their studies.[1] These have come to form an impressive list of publications that cannot be considered in its entirety.[2] National tendencies in studies, which have obviously attained a high level of expansion in France, are even referred to; these tend to prioritize those works that deal with the lands now covered by certain modern states. In this context, we should remember the interest expressed by Napoleon I in the *Bellum Gallicum* and shown by Napoleon III, who wrote a monumental work on the figure of Caesar himself.[3] Neither can we omit the importance of the

[1] A very clear example is the opening paragraph of the work by F. Gundolf, *César, histoire et légende* (Paris, 1923), 7 (French translation by M. Beaufils from the work *Caesar. Geschichte seines Ruhms*, published in German in Berlin in 1924); on the foundations of this work, see M. Thiman, *Caesars Schatten. Die Bibliothek von Friedrich Gundolf. Rekonstruction und Wissenschaftsgeschichte* (Heidelberg, 2003). F. Gundolf was also the author of other works on Caesar, as well as the key study, *Caesar in neunzehnten Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1926).

[2] See, for example, J. Kroymann, "Caesar und das Corpus Caesarianum in der neueren Forschung: Gesamtbibliographie 1945–1970," *ANRW* 1.3 (Berlin, 1973),457–487. The fascicle *Catalogue des ouvrages de César* (Paris, 1906), which forms part of vol. 25 of the *Catalogue général des livres imprimés de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, continues to be of great use for early editions.

[3] Napoleon I's reflections on the *Bellum Gallicum* appeared with Artaud's translation of Caesar's work (Paris, 1860), although the *Précis des guerres de César*, dictated by the

German contribution; T. Mommsen's favorable attitude was a decisive factor for this,[4] as was the interpretation of N.D. Fustel de Coulanges in France,[5] which was expanded particularly in the opening decades of the twentieth century, accompanied by a considerable flourishing of French studies, which in the second half of the same century were reinforced by a substantial number of contributions in Spanish and Italian. The closing years of the last century and the first few of the present one have witnessed an authentic "revival" of Caesar and his work, which stretches beyond the limits of purely historical studies, and borders on the realm of fictionalized biography in much the same way as Berthold Brecht brought his figure back to life.[6]

It would not be fair to begin a study such as this without recalling the work of Edward Gibbon, which, although not directly dedicated to the period of Caesar, not only defined a state of enlightened opinion, but also a vein of thought that was neither to remain unnoticed nor left unfollowed in subsequent historical writing; thus, when referring to the conquest of Britannia, he states: "In this single instance the successors of Caesar and Augustus were persuaded to follow the example of the former rather than the precept of the latter."[7] This is a clear example of how the

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emperor to Count Marchand while in exile on the island of St. Helena in 1819, had been published in Paris in 1836. Fortune has smiled on Napoleon's notes, and they have been published in several languages; thus, for example, they were still included in the Spanish version published in Barcelona in 1956; a final complete French edition was published by J. Hammort as *César, La Guerre des Gaules avec comm. de Napoléon* (Paris, 1970). Napoleon III's *Histoire de Jules César*, the preface of which was dated in the Palais des Tuileries on March 20, 1862, was printed in Paris in 1865–1866 by the publisher H. Plon with, at the start of the second volume, an interesting list of the rulers who had taken an interest in, annotated, or translated Caesar's works, among whom the Emperor Charles V stands out. We should also remember that the *C. Julii Caesaris commentarii de bello Gallico et civili, aliorum de bellis Alexandrino, Africano et Hispaniensi*, by F. Dübner, who collated new manuscripts, was published by the same H. Plon in 1867, by order of the emperor.

[4] Cf. on this question C. Meier, *Die Ohnmacht des allmächtigen Dictators Caesar. Drei biographische Skizzen* (Frankfurt am Mein, 1980), 13.

[5] Cf. A. Momigliano, "La città antica de Fustel de Coulanges," *RSI* 82 (1970), 81–94; in addition, L. Raditsa, "Julius Caesar and his writings," *ANRW* 1.3 (Berlin, 1973), 417–456, esp. 431. Vol. 3 of C. Jullian, *Histoire de la Gaule* (Paris, 1920), is a classic of French historical writing, which covers Caesar's campaigns.

[6] B. Brecht, *Die Geschäfte der Herrn Julius Caesar* (Berlin, 1957).

[7] E. Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, 4 vols. (London, n. d.) 1:19 (derived from the edition in 6 vols. [London, 1910] in The Chandos Classics, which I have used). The equation of Caesar with respect to Augustus can be seen again when the deities derived from the so-called imperial cult are referred to; cf. ch. 3, p. 66 of the same edition.

Roman emperors themselves are supposed to have been able to consider that the origin of the power that they wielded was derived directly from Caesar himself. There can be no doubt that in this respect the footsteps of Suetonius himself, who did not hesitate to place the *vita* of Caesar at the head of the biographies of the first twelve emperors, are being followed.[8]

Myth, legend and history are intermingled when Caesar is discussed. He has inspired an enormous variety of works, ranging from literature to art and music, and his name has been applied to a way of wielding power that has been coveted by some of the great names of later history, as well as having been used to identify the emperors both of Rome itself and of the empires that in some way considered themselves to have been the successors to it.

It would be bordering on an act of hubris to claim to know everything that has been written on Caesar's work and life, a field that has not only led to progress in knowledge of this subject, but which has also given rise to certain works that in themselves are nowadays considered to be classics of historiography,[9] and not only those linked to his figure but also to the entire complex period of the transition from the Republic to the Principate.[10] Herein lies the opportunity of the subject that has been proposed, in which it will be possible for me to analyze a still unresolved problem: what Caesar's aim is in writing his *commentarii* and the value of the continuations of the same, which make up the body of the *corpus*

[8] Cf. E. Cizek, *Structures et idéologie dans "Les Vies des Douze Césars" de Suétone* (Bucharest, 1977), esp. 52–56, with a good summary of previous contributions. See also B. Mouchova, *Studien zu Kaiserbiographien Suetons Acta* (Universitatis Carolinae, Philosophica et historica, Monographia) 22 (Prague, 1968), esp. 17–64; W. Steidle, *Sueton und die antike Biographie*, (Zetemata) 1 (Munich, 1963)^2, esp. 129–177, is still important. More recently, see J. Gascou, *Suétone historien* (Rome, 1984), esp. 347–456 for the *species*, which form the framework of the biographies.

[9] F.E. Adcock, *Caesar as Man of Letters* (Cambridge, 1956), has been especially fortunate; the following are also works that define a period: W. Warde Fowler, *Julius Caesar and the Foundation of the Roman Imperial System* (New York, 1892); A. Alföldi, *Studien über Caesars Monarchie* (Lund, 1952–1953); ibid., *Caesariana. Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Geschichte Caesars und seiner Zeit* (Bonn, 1984); the study by J. Carcopino, *César* in *Histoire Romaine*, ed. G. Glotz, 2.3 (Paris, 1936, 1959^4, with an edition revised by J. Carcopino and P. Grimal, Paris, 1968), has enjoyed an independent life as a monograph, as will be seen in the following notes, in which the main works dealing with Caesar's biography and his historical times are brought together. In addition, see J. Carcopino, "Autour de César," in *Profils de conquerants* (Paris, 1961), 241–251.

[10] Such as R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (Oxford, 1939; reprint 1960); C. Meier, *Res publica amissa. Eine Studie zur Verfassung und Geschichte des späten römischen Republik* (Wiesbaden, 1966; new ed. Frankfurt, 1980), esp. 267–300; P.A. Brunt, *The Fall of the Roman Republic and Related Essays* (Oxford, 1988).

Caesarianum. I can advance that I believe that the answer is reflected in the very title of his works as recorded by the literary tradition, and his objective is defined by the text itself; for this purpose, it is sufficient simply to try to understand what meaning Caesar sought to give to his work—and its aim—which distances it from the autobiographical field, but which, on the other hand, does not allow us to consider it simply as a straightforward work recording past events or an account of a purely historical nature.

Caesar's Commentarii and Their Literary Precedents

This is not the occasion to dwell on the complicated subject of whether Caesar's works were autobiographical in nature or not—a question that has generally been answered in the negative in the opinion of the majority of scholars—or on the relationship between Caesar's works and the previous Greco-Roman tradition.[11] Neither will I delve into the continuity or discontinuity between Caesar's works and the most recent annals or autobiographical commentaries, whether these might be Sulla's *hypomnemata*[12] or the autobiographies of Marcus Aemilius Scaurus and of Publius Rutilius Rufus, in addition to that of Quintus Lutatius Catulus;[13]

[11] G. Misch, *Geschichte der Autobiographie*, 1 (Bern, 1949[3]), 248–253, in which he clearly states: "Cäsars Kommentarien sind keine Autobiographie" (250). In addition, H. Peter, *Wahrheit, and Kunst, Geschichtschreibung und Plagiat im klassischen Altertum* (Hildesheim, 1965; reprint of the Leipzig, 1911 ed.), 323–325, 430; cf. now F. Bérard, "Les *Commentaires* de César: autobiographie, memoires ou histoire?," in *L'invention de l'autobiographie d'Hésiode à Saint Augustin. Actes du deuxième colloque de l'Équipe de recherche sur l'hellénisme post-classique*, eds. M.-F. Baslez, P. Hoffmann, and L. Pernot (Paris, École normale supérieure, June 14–16, 1990) (Paris, 1993), 85–95, where he concludes that it is not an autobiographical account in the strict sense, but he does not hesitate to make use of this genre when it suits his work and purposes. Cf. in general for Caesar, F. Bömer, "Der Commentarius. Zur Vorgeschichte und literarischen Form der Schriften Caesars," *Hermes* 81 (1953), 210–250. D. Musti, "Il pensiero storico romano," in *Lo spazio letterario di Roma antica*, eds. G. Cavallo, P. Fedeli, A. Giardina, 1 (Rome, 1989), 177–240, is clearly in favor of classifying Caesar's work within the Hellenistic tradition, esp. 207–208, where he emphasizes Caesar's objectivity, although not his impartiality.

[12] Peter, *HRR*, 1:195–204, for the *L. Cornelii Sullae commentarii rerum gestarum* in at least 22 books; G. Misch, *Geschichte der Autobiographie*, 181–298, esp. 254–258 for Sulla. Cf. in addition G. Pascucci, "I Commentarii di Silla," in *Studi Urbinati di Storia, Filosofia e Letteratura*, eds. S. Boldrini, C. Questa, S. Lanciotti, and R. Raffaelli, (Atti del convegno Gli storiografi latini trammandati in frammenti, Urbino, May 9–11, 1974) 49 (1975), 283–296, now in *Scritti scelti*, 2 (Florence, 1983), 615–630. See the chapter on this subject by W.J. Tatum in the same volume.

[13] *MRR* 2, Index of Careers, 528, 613, 583, also *MRR* 3, 10–12, 184, 131, respectively; cf. also H. Peter, *HRR*, 1:185–186, 187–190, 191–194, respectively, for the fragments of their

these are subjects that have little to do with the reality of Caesar's work and especially with his composition techniques and his immediate aims, beyond the fact that his work can be classified within an aristocratic tradition that reflects his training, family, and initial interests, but placed—like all the elements forming part of his activity—in the pursuit of power of the political interests of his career and of certain objectives that were to lead the Roman Republic toward a fundamental transformation.[14]

The works of the so-called *corpus Caesarianum* certainly written by him have aroused more than a little interest in recent years, although it must be pointed out that, as will be seen in the relevant section, studies on the rest of the *corpus*, on the so-called pseudo-Caesarian works, do not lag far behind.[15] Ultimately, the issue lies in the analysis of the contents of these works, in other words on their reliability; the main problem is that scholars have considered and combined a particular way of seeing events and of analyzing and explaining what happened, which to me seems to be a preferable approach to their interpretation.[16] Moreover, as is well known, the justified suspicion that the events detailed may have been manipulated is of decisive importance in the way that the contents of Caesar's text are treated in critical and historical terms.[17] But this suspicion must weigh far more heavily on modern critical studies than the event could have had at the time it occurred, when his work must surely have been understood as an element of apparently purely objective nature, with a political and propaganda message that was both real and essential while, at one and the same time, expected and accepted.

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works. Cf. a summary in M. López López, *La historiografía en Grecia y Roma. Conceptos y autores* (Quaderns del Departament de Geografia i Història de l'Estudi general de Lleida; Lleida, 1991), 9:86–90. J.M. Candau's contribution in this volume is of great importance.

[14] In this context the title proposed by L. Canali for the chapter that Caesar shares with Augustus in his book, *Scrittori e potere nell'antica Roma* (Soveria Mannelli, 2006), 73–84 is "Quando i potenti parlano di se stessi;" esp. 73–78 are of interest.

[15] For a good recent summary, see, for example, P.-J. Quetglas Nicolau, "César y el *Corpus Caesarianum*," in *Julio César y Corduba: tiempo y espacio en la campaña de Munda (49–45 a. C.)*, eds. E. Melchor Gil, J. Mellado Rodríguez, and J.F. Rodríguez-Neila (Cordoba, 2005), 139–164.

[16] Cf., e.g., W. Richter, *Caesars als Darsteller seiner Taten* (Heidelberg, 1977); H. Schneider, *Untersuchungen zur Darstellung von Ereignissen bei Caesar und seinen Fortsetzern*, (DPhil., Freiburg i. Br., 1959).

[17] As in M. Rambaud, *L'art de la déformation historique dans les commentaires de César* (Paris, 1953; reprint 1966); G. Pascucci, "I mezzi espressivi e stilistici di Cesare nel proceso di deformazione storica dei *Commentarii*," in *Scritti scelti*, 2 (Florence, 1983), 717–759 (previously published in *Studi classici e orientali* 6 [1957], 134–174).

The Bellum Gallicum: The Narration of a Personal Adventure

In this section, it is not my aim to offer a detailed description of the contents of the work[18] or the problems involved in establishing the titles of the two *commentarii* of certain authorship.[19] My aim is rather to define their essential features, their historical value, their role and place in Roman historiography, and especially the characteristics that mark them as historical works. I will consider the style and vocabulary—decisive factors for understanding Caesar's work—in the corresponding sections. Nevertheless, it is worth briefly recalling the contents of the different books that make up the work before making the pertinent comments on it.[20]

Book 1 corresponds to the year 58 BC and in it, after a geographical description of *Gallia*, the campaign against the *Helvetii* and especially the confrontation against Ariovistus are recounted.[21] The events of 57 BC are covered in Book 2, which deals with the campaign against the Belgae and other peoples such as the Remi, the Bellovaci, the Nervii and the Aduatici. Book 3, referring to 56 BC, is concerned with Caesar's own campaign in Armorica and that of Publius Licinius Crassus in Aquitania. The campaigns against the Germani are the subject of Book 4, and in it the war against the Usipetae and the Tencteri, as well as the Roman forces' first crossing of the Rhenus and the first expeditions to Britannia in the year 55 BC, are described. The following year, 54 BC, is covered by Book 5, which starts with the second expedition against Britannia and continues with the suppression of the Eburones, one of the peoples of the Belgae. Book 6 deals with the second crossing of the Rhenus, in 53 BC, and the second expedition against the Eburones; it includes the famous ethnological digression on Galli and Germani. In Book 7, the last one

[18] H. Oppermann, *Caesar. Der Schriftsteller und sein Werk* (Leipzig, 1933); cf. in general terms, L. Raditsa, "Julius Caesar," 417–456.

[19] Cf. F.W. Kelsey, "The Title of Caesar's Work on the Gallic and Civic Wars," *TPAPhA* 36 (1905), 211–238, which concluded by proposing as the general title of the work *C. Iuli Caesaris commentarii rerum gestarum*, in a tradition that Augustus was surely later to follow.

[20] The volume by Cesare, *La guerra gallica*, trans. L. Montanari (Siena, 2006), with notes by Montanari and an excellent, documented introduction by G. Cipriani and M.G. Masselli, v–cxi, is at present extremely useful.

[21] Cf. K. Christ, "Caesar und Ariovist," *Chiron* 4 (1974), 251–292.

to have definitely been written by Caesar, we find the general uprising of Gallia led by Vercingetorix and the events that took place thereafter: the capture of Avaricum, the Roman failure at Gergovia, the episode at Lutetia and the siege and fall of Alesia.

In a practical but enlightening simplification, M. Rambaud divided the basic sources of each of the books into three kinds of material: the lists and reports of the *legati*; the accounts from letters or reports sent by Caesar to the Senate; and the different technical elements in the reports or accounts, included within each book because of their picturesque nature, their emotional or moving contents, or because of their role in the composition of a book, as in the case of introductions, transitions or conclusions. It is obvious that these elements are to be found in varying proportions from one book to another, thereby ensuring that each book possessed its own personality and individual appearance, which disguises the composition techniques employed.[22]

The fact that the *Bellum Gallicum* and the *Bellum Civile* received the name of *commentarii* is highly significant for two reasons. The first of them, as has already been mentioned, is that this classifies them within an old Roman tradition of "entries" or brief notes of an annalistic nature, practiced by the leading Roman religious colleges as a historical record of their activity and also by contemporary society, as is the case of Cicero.[23] From a literary point of view, it is difficult to forget the preface to Aulus Gellius' *Noctes Atticae*, in which he adheres to a long tradition of using titles that apparently seek to minimize the importance of the work as part of an intended *captatio benevolentiae*.[24] The simplicity and succinct style to be found in the case of the *Bellum Gallicum*, as well as the absence of rhetorical adornments, have been put forward as a possible justification for the use of the *commentarii* name.

The publication of the work is an argument that we cannot lose sight of when it comes to evaluating it, since it seems to have appeared in stages after each of its parts had been written,[25] although they could

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[22] M. Rambaud, *L'art*, 51.

[23] For a good summary, see J.-M. André and A. Hus, *L'histoire à Rome. Historiens et biographes dans la littérature latine* (Paris, 1974), 24–39, 195–200, esp. 28–30.

[24] Gell., *praef.*, 3–10.

[25] See now T.P. Wiseman, "The Publication of *De Bello Gallico*," in *Julius Caesar as Artful Reporter: The War Commentaries as Political Instruments*, eds. K. Welch and A. Powell (London, 1988), 1–10; C.B. Krebs, "'Imaginary Geography' in Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum*," *Am. Journal of Philology* 127 (2006), 111–136, esp. 115–116; Krebs believes in

possibly have been reworked to give them unity in the winter of 51–50 BC.[26]

It seems clear that Caesar's main objective was his own glorification, over and above a simple "Selbstdarstellung," or self-representation; it has a well-defined goal: to contribute to the personal glory of the main character, Caesar, in other words, himself. Caesar's motives are the subject of debate, but there is unanimous agreement that this objective should be given pride of place.[27] As a consequence, the discourse is concise as regards events and possesses an implicit interpretation that the reader deduces effortlessly. Caesar and his *humanitas* are the essence of Roman virtues combined with the characteristics necessary for a successful general:[28] opportunity, authority, the capacity to react, good luck, and consensus among his men—all this colored by more personal moral values such as clemency and deliberation—in addition to singular bravery, *virtus*, which, moreover, was essential for any Roman male. All this was immersed in values and interests that were especially understandable to a Roman, who always had to place his figure in contrast to that of the barbarians.[29]

For this purpose, it is clear that it was not a matter of giving an impression of a superior, aristocratic view of the situation, but rather he seeks to give the image of an accurate account and of a pragmatic interpretation of the events being provided by the author, who was at one and the same time the main character; as a consequence, the greater the consensus, the better, and at the same time it served to strengthen his own charismatic figure, an aspect not always easy to maintain for a long time.[30] To this should be added the fact that it was also a matter of

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a possible publication as from 56/55 BC, although he points out that the *litterae Caesaris* could also have circulated at this time, so that knowledge of events on the part of contemporaries might not necessarily have implied the partial circulation of the *Bellum Gallicum* at that moment.

[26] Cf. M. Radin, "The Date of Composition of Caesar's Gallic War," *CPh* 13 (1918), 283–300; L. Halkin, "La date de publication de la Guerre des Gaules," *Mélanges Paul Thomas* (Gand, 1930), 407–416. Once again, an excellent summary in J.-M. André and A. Hus, *L'histoire à Rome*, 26.

[27] U. Knoche, "Caesars Commentarii, ihr Gegenstand und ihre Absicht," *Gymnasium* 58 (1951), 139–160.

[28] Now A.K. Goldsworthy, "Instinctive Genius: The Depiction of Caesar the General," in *Julius Caesar as Artful Reporter*, 193–220.

[29] Cf. J. Rüger, *Barbarus. Wort und Begriff bei Cicero, Livius, Caesar* (DPhil., Göttingen, 1966); J. Barlow, "Noble Gauls and Their Other in Caesar's Propaganda," in *Julius Caesar as Artful Reporter*, 139–170.

[30] Cf. in general terms, Z. Yavetz, *Julius Caesar and his Public Image* (London, 1983).

making the events, as they are explained, credible; with this aim in mind, contrasting versions and opinions had to be included.[31]

It has justifiably been highlighted that it is precisely in the *Bellum Gallicum* that Caesar gives in to the temptation of explaining events from a scientific, almost ethnological, viewpoint in his description of the people and the land of the Gauls, as the majority of scholars have recognized,[32] which could apparently have diverted him from his main goal. This geographical and ethnographic inquisitiveness takes the form of his well-known digressions, which have been amply examined; furthermore, let us remember that in some cases, depending on their style, it has even been proposed that these were imperial-period interpolations inserted into Caesar's text as explanatory glosses.[33] This is a position that involves a degree of presumption that, for the time being, has not been shown to be proven with any degree of certainty; in all probability, these digressions were an integral part of the original text of Caesar's work.[34] Editorial attitudes toward this matter have been diverse, ranging from, for example, A. Klotz's total exclusion to the acceptance of some on the part of L.A. Constans, who claimed to see the hand of Caesar's collaborators in some of them, an intervention accepted by the latter as they were explanatory notes to satisfy public curiosity.[35]

As I have already stated, my own opinion is close to the ones held by those who believe Caesar to have been the author of these digressions; perhaps they can be considered to have responded to other criteria insofar as their aims, but they fit perfectly within Caesar's style and vocabulary. Although claims have been made as regards the presence of changes in the style of composition, and it is true that these exist at a minimal level, they are perhaps the result of this diversity

[31] Here it is important to mention the classic work by T. Rice Holmes, *Caesar's Conquest of Gaul* (Oxford, 1931; reprint of the 2nd corrected edition of 1911), esp. the chapter "The Credibility of Caesar's Narrative," 211–256. More recently, see F. Fischer, "Caesar Griff nach Gallien," *Klio* 91 (2009), 435–442.

[32] See, for example, J. Harmand, "Une composante scientifique du Corpus Caesarianum: le portrait de la Gaule dans le De Bello Gallico I–VII," *ANRW* 1.3 (Berlin, 1973), 523–595; cf. in addition M. Rambaud, *L'art*, 324–339.

[33] For example, W. Hering, "Die Interpolation im Prooemium des BG," *Philologus* 100 (1956), 67–99.

[34] As stated by C.B. Krebs, "Imaginary Geography," 111–136, esp. 113–119, where he deals with Caesar's view of Gallia and Germania and the impact that this had on his contemporaries, such as Cicero, who was aware of Caesar's geographical description in his *De provinciis consularibus* (22, 32–33) dated to 56 BC.

[35] For a short, correct, balanced summary, see J.-M. André and A. Hus, *L'histoire à Rome*, 99–100.

of criteria and aims.[36] In this context, we should draw attention to the description of *Gallia* in the first book (which can arouse few doubts), the discussion of the Suebi in Book 4, the geographical description of rivers in Book 4, the description of Britannia in Book 5, and the detailed description of Galli and Germani in Book 6, to give just a few examples of his interest that, contrary to the opinion of many scholars, might also have been shared by the public to which he addressed his work, and therefore further proof of Caesar's skill at winning them over.[37]

The same occurs with the explicit mention of the abandonment of the idea of conquering Germania on the part of Caesar, which has recently been interpreted as the way of giving an image of an *imperator optimus*, who remains prudent, hence the reference at this point, to Darius and his renouncing of Scythia.[38]

Even though studies have basically focused on Caesar's military techniques, since the work sometimes voluntarily goes into tactical explanations in great detail in order to demonstrate his command of the *scientia militaris* in what has come to be called a *sermo castrensis*,[39] more recently greater emphasis has rightly been placed on the use of diplomacy in Caesar's campaigns, which seems to have been a decisive element in their unfolding, over and above purely war-related events;[40] this must have been an additional value that Caesar succeeded in making explicit in the eyes of his co-citizens and which frequently passes unnoticed by the modern-day reader.

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[36] Cf. F. Beckmann, *Geographie und Ethnographie in Caesars Bellum Gallicum* (Dortmund, 1930); F.E. Adcock, *Caesar*, 96–98.

[37] Quintilianus surely seems to understand it in this way when he states, *et fortitudinem Gallorum Germanorumque miramur quo sit maior C. Caesaris gloriam* (*Inst. or.* 8.4.20). See in general N. Horsfall, "Illusion and Reality in Latin Topographical Writing," *G&R* 32 (1985), 197–208.

[38] C.B. Krebs, "Imaginary Geography," 127–132.

[39] Cf. Y. Le Bohec, *César chef de guerre. César stratège et Tacticien* (Monaco, 2001). A classic work on the subject can be found in the two volumes by T.A. Dodge, *Caesar. A History of the Art of the War among the Romans down to the End of the Roman Empire with a Detailed Account of the Campaigns of Caius Julius Caesar* (New York, 1963, first published in 1891); and also the two volumes by E. Stoffel, *Histoire de Jules César, Guerre civile* (Paris, 1887). Cf. also the language employed, G.M. Masselli, *Cesare, La guerra gallica*, lxi–lxii.

[40] As discussed by J. Szidat, *Caesars diplomatische Tätigkeit im gallischen Krieg*, Historia Einzelschriften 14 (Wiesbaden, 1971). Cf. also now J. García Riaza, "*Legati ad Caesarem*. Instituciones diplomáticas indígenas en el *Bellum Gallicum*," *Veleia* 26 (2009), 47–61.

Nevertheless, a substantial proportion of studies, even present-day ones, lean toward analyzing the historical events narrated by Caesar and differentiating between what actually happened and the possible fictional elements included in them. The list of works arising from the analysis of the campaigns in the Gauls is enormous and, in order to limit myself to a few examples, the Alesia episode alone has given rise to a substantial number of now classic studies,[41] while neither have the Battle of Gergovia nor the consequent crisis of Roman control been ignored.[42] The archaeology of Alesia and the siege suffered by the *oppidum* have been well studied, even from a tactical point of view, and there is no lack of recent monographs on the subject, as well as on the Gallic campaigns as a whole.[43]

If we wish to return to more ideological aspects, once again, within this same context, we shall see how his relationship with his soldiers is revealed as another of the key aspects[44] in achieving popularity on the basis of the irrefutable evidence for their devotion to and confidence in their leader, which implies that a message proposing a comparable attitude among the Roman people was likewise being transmitted.

The work thus contains a range of features that make its clearly political aims apparent; these goals are based on the interest aroused by Caesar's achievements and their topical nature, while at the same time they are hidden beneath a veneer of historical objectivity as if the work were merely recording past events by means of the gradual exposition of what happened year by year.

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[41] J. Carcopino, *Alésia et les ruses de César* (Paris, 1958); E. de Saint-Denis, "Y a-t-il encore une énigme d'Alésia?," *LEC* 37 (1969), 285–301; J. Harmand, *Une campagne césarienne, Alésia* (Paris, 1967); M. Scarola, "Alesia accerchiata, (Cesare, B.G. 7, 72–74): racconto e strategia," *Ann. Fac. di Lett. e Filos. Di Bari, 27–28* (Bari, 1984), 119–150; or, in more general terms, R. Schmittlein, *Avec César en Gaule* (Paris, 1970).

[42] M. Gorce, *César devant Gergovie* (Paris, 1947); A. Noché, *L'epopée de Vercingétorix. Gergovie, la victoire gauloise* (Moulins, 1949); P. Eychart, *Gergovie. Légende et réalité* (Clermont-Ferrand, 1969).

[43] Cf., e.g., J. Le Gall, *Alesia en 1965. Sondages sur la contravallation césarienne*, summary in *BSAF* (1969), 29–32; J. Joly, *Guide de siège d'Alésia* (Dijon, 1966); J. Le Gall, "Les conditions d'un siège. Alésia," *REL* 47 (1969), 72–85. Cf. now C. Goudineau, *César et la Gaule* (Paris, 2000[2]); also J.J. Le Hatte, *Histoire de la Gaule romaine* (Paris, 1966).

[44] J. Vogt, *Caesar und seine Soldaten* (Leipzig, 1940); Y. Le Bohec, *César chef de guerre. César stratège et tacticien* (L'art de la guerre, Paris, 2001).

The Bellum Civile as the Continuation of the Account of a Career

This is quite possibly the most difficult of Caesar's works to classify from nearly all points of view: date, aims, and contents.[45] If its complex contents are examined briefly, we can see how Book 1 deals with the events of the year 49 BC, which go from the precedents to the civil war and the crossing of the Rubicon to control of Italy by Caesar, with a substantial part of the text being take up, as was absolutely necessary in an account that claimed to be objective, by Pompey and the unsuccessful efforts to reach an agreement with the latter. The various stages in this first volume include the capture of Corfinium, the entry into Brundisium and Caesar's presence in Hispania, as well as the battles against Afranius and Petreius and the episodes around Ilerda. The reports of C. Scribonius Curio, C. Fabius, and D. Iunius Brutus, apparently faithfully reproduced, are important.[46] The second book also deals with the events of the same year, but outside the Italian peninsula, especially the events that occurred in Hispania during the struggle against Pompey's legates, and the control of Hispania, with particular insistence on Varro's role; in addition, the siege and capture of Massalia by Caesar's forces is described, together with Curio's unfortunate expedition to Africa, where, once again, the latter's reports seem to play a fundamental role. The third and final book is far more complicated as regards its structure, since it narrates the events of the year 48 BC, by when Caesar was a dictator and during which he undertook the final campaign against Pompey's followers in Greece. The news from the Adriatic plays a leading part. The role of Marcus Antonius and his reports are emphasized.[47] The account of the siege of Dyrrachium is closely followed by the description of the preparations for the Battle of Pharsalus and the event itself, together with the naval operations that followed. The reports of L. Caninius Rebilus, Q. Fufius Calenus, as well as those of P. Vatinius, P. Sulpicius Rufus, and M. Pomponius are particularly noteworthy within the makeup of the narrative

[45] K. Abel, "Zur Datierung von Cäsars Bellum Civile," *MH* 15 (1958), 56–74; J. Collins, "On the Date and Interpretation of the Bellum Civile," *AJPh* 70 (1959), 113–132. In general terms, see K. Barwick, *Caesars Bellum civile* (Berlin, 1951).

[46] *MRR* 2, Index of Careers, 614, 561, 576; *MRR* 3:186, 85, where it is insisted that this might have been C. Fabius Hadrianus, and 112–113.

[47] Cf., for example, F. Chamoux, *Marc Antoine, dernier prince de l'Orient grec* (Paris, 1986), esp. 65–71.

text.[48] Pompey's flight to Egypt, where he met his death at the hands of King Ptolemy, who thus believed himself to be serving Caesar's interests, is also contained in this part. It seems to reflect an account commissioned by Caesar on Pompey's subsequent activities, which he made use of in this work, adapting it to the composition of the text, which finishes with a catalogue of prodigies.

In this work by Caesar, Pompeius Magnus retains a leading role, and it seems as if he almost wants to be presented as the only figure with which Caesar seeks to contrast himself. The historical circumstances undoubtedly contribute to this situation, but there can be no doubt that Caesar's skill as a historian with a specific aim in mind meant that he knew how to take advantage of his rival's enormous prestige for his own benefit.

I have already endeavored to show how, within the framework of the two *commentarii*, the *Bellum Civile*, in contrast to the *Bellum Gallicum*, exhibits a degree of chronological distance between the events and their diffusion.[49] This leads one to think that, in comparison with the immediate objective of the *Bellum Gallicum*, it had a different aim, although the elements making up the text and the technique employed, as have been amply demonstrated, are almost identical, even though, logically, a series of specific features and a certain stylistic evolution have been detected.[50] The question of to what extent it is a truthful account has also received attention from different standpoints, some of them clearly favorable;[51] we should, however, agree that this is undoubtedly a subject that is destined to remain inconclusive.[52]

The subject of the chronology of the work's composition and publication cannot be discussed at length, but the general parameters of these

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[48] *MRR* 2, Index of Careers, 542, 567, 632, 624, 604, respectively; in addition, *MRR* 3:49, 94, for Caninius and Fufius.

[49] Cf. L. Canfora, *Storici della rivoluzione romana* (Bari, 1974), 24–26, on the circulation of versions prior to its publication and the hypothesis of the posthumous publication of the *commentarii* on the *Bellum Civile*, which may have only been the case for a part of Caesar's work on the basis of Suet., *Caes*. 56.4.

[50] A. La Penna, "Tendenze e arte del bellum civile di Cesare," *Maia* 5 (1952), 191–233. In more general terms, see I.J. Schlicher, "The Development of Caesar's Narrative Style," *CPh* 31 (1936), 212–224.

[51] As in M. Ruch, "La veracité du récit de César dans le six premiers chapitres du De Bello Ciuili," *REL* 27 (1950), 118–137, where he firmly defends the veracity of the information and the truthfulness of the succession of events explained. See also J.P.D.V. Balsdon, "The Veracity of Caesar," *Greece and Rome* 4.2 (1957), 19–28.

[52] Most works have generally tended to study the *Bellum Gallicum* in this way. For example, a list of those supporting (or not) the veracity of Caesar's work prior to 1966

aspects can be defined. At first sight, it seems to be a justification, drawn up after the crossing of the Rubicon, in order to offer his own explanation of the events leading up to the Battle of Pharsalus. If we accept this reasoning, it could have been published between 49 and 48, or, as has also been proposed, it could even be dated to the year 45 BC, being written by Caesar toward the end of his triumphal career as he prepared to leave for the Orient.[53]

At this juncture, it is worth recalling that the consequences of these events were to last long after the contents of the entire *corpus Caesarianum* and were practically not to come to an end until Agrippa's naval victory at Naulochos in 36 BC, when he finally succeeded in defeating Sextus Pompeius' fleet. The work thus involves the explanation of events that were to have far-reaching changes in Rome as their consequence; as a result, it is worth considering the question of whether Caesar was or was not aware of the transcendence of these events beyond the immediate circumstances.

It seems obvious that this line of argument, proposed by a substantial proportion of scholars, takes as its starting point Caesar's supposed need to justify his position until the very end of his life, a situation that does not seem to coincide with the idea, also put forward by many, that the work remained incomplete as Caesar felt no "political need" to continue it once his power had been consolidated.

Once again, we are faced with an interpretation that is very difficult to maintain in the light of what turns out to be a largely literary work. An interpretation that only took as its starting point Caesar as a writer might lead us to think that he simply did not have the opportunity, in spite of the speed at which he wrote, to complete it in the midst of the rapid chain of events that took place in his final years; rather, it was a project that was left in a corner with the hope of being continued, which was surely what led his followers to write the continuation of the work, using materials

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can be found in the second edition of M. Rambaud, *L'art*, 411–412. Another scholar inclined to believe it to be truthful, despite the exaggerations that can be detected, was J. Beaujeu, "Le soulèvement de 54 en Gaule et la veracité de César," *Actes du Congrès de l'Association Guillaume Budé (1958)*, (Paris, 1960), 249–251; see also P. Huber, *Die Glaubwürdigkeit Cäsars in seinem Bericht über den gallischem Krieg* (Bamberg, 1931[2]; 1st ed. 1913); H. Hagendahl, "The Mutiny of Vesontio. A Problem of Tendency and Credibility in Caesar's Gallic War," *C&M* 6 (1944), 1–40; and some of the studies included in K. Welch and A. Powell, eds., *Julius Caesar as Artful Reporter*.

[53] A brief but precise summary of this complex question can be found in J.-M. André and A. Hus, *L'histoire à Rome*, 27.

that he would have undoubtedly made use of himself. However, we cannot be absolutely sure that the materials employed by the authors of the *Bella* who sought to complete his work were necessarily his own, even though some scholars have tried find parallels between some of them, as is the case of the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, with preparations for the text carried out by Caesar or even by Hirtius, the supposed heir to his materials. My personal view inclines me to believe that, as in the case of the *Bellum Gallicum*, this is a work that is the fruit of the interest arising at a particular moment and with the aim of offering his own historical explanation of events, which were narrated and seen somewhat differently by other sources that surely circulated and were also made public. Once again the possibility that the work was a straightforward one recording past events, rather than a justification, and that his aim was to ensure that his own interpretation of what had happened, based on a detailed, apparently objective account, should survive, ought to be borne in mind.

It might even be proposed that the publication of the *Bellum Civile*, in the state that it has come down to us, can be considered as a reply. An immediate reply, a supposedly unbiased and specific one, even though incomplete, to the various interpretations of the situation arising at a certain moment, which the author sought to present as, or he may have wanted it to have the appearance of, an expository historical account, with the consequent literary associations, which was as far as possible from being an apology. In this case, the desire to complete the *Bellum Civile* can be considered to have been more of a delayed literary wish than a compelling requirement, which it had ceased to be in political terms. By completing his work, his continuators could surely have seen the posthumous fulfillment of Caesar's wishes in this historical and literary sense as well, and not simply an apologetic one, although they were to achieve this with widely differing results.

Vocabulary and Contemporary Political Concepts as the Key to Understanding the Meaning of Caesar's Works

Caesar's interest in vocabulary is evident, and he even studies it from a theoretical point of view, as is expounded in an extant fragment of his *De analogia*: *verborum delectus originem eloquentiae*.[54] Precision in the

[54] Fr. 1, G. Funaioli, ed., *Grammaticae Romanae fragmenta*, 1 (Leipzig, 1907; reprint 1965), 146, from Cic., *Brut*. 252; for all Caesar's grammatical fragments, see 143–157.

expression of his thought has as its logical consequence, in the way he conceived language, a simplicity of verbal expression for which we can also adduce another fragment of his *De analogia*: *habe semper in memoria et in pectore, tu tamquam scopulum sic fugias inauditum atque insolens verbum*,[55] in which Caesar's Atticism is clearly revealed. Nevertheless, the prose that Caesar made use of does not lack what we might call technical terms related to political language,[56] since, in spite of his wish to use a direct form of expression, they were indispensable for correctly understanding the message contained within his texts. These concepts fall perfectly within the known political language of the Republic,[57] and I would go so far as to say that they do not even include any type of semasiological change in their application, which would seem to be in perfect agreement with the wish for *simplicitas* inherent in Caesar's writings.

Auctoritas as a civilian, and subsequently a military quality was a clear value on which Caesar sought to base his personal prestige from his very first moments; he surely considered it to have been the principal weapon that the priesthood, magistracies and military command had placed in his hands. *Humanitas* was almost a form of behavior, a means not only of personal identification but also an element for establishing relationships, for communion, and for seeking consensus with the people of Rome. *Clementia*, on the other hand, moved in a far more restricted context and aspired to be indicative of his personality,[58] a reaction to the special favor of fortune of which he was the recipient and, as a result, his response to the *felicitas* that presided over his actions[59] when dealing with those

[55] Fr. 2, Funaioli, 146–147, in Aulus Gellius, 1, 10, 4; cf. E. Norden, *Die Antike Kunstprosa*, 1:188, 210.

[56] For Caesar's lexis, cf. H. Merguet, *Lexicon zu den Schriften Cäsars und seine Fortsetzer mit Angabe sämmtlicher Stellen* (Jena, 1886); R. Lecrompe, *César, De Bello Gallico, Index verborum. Documents pour servir a l'enseignement de la langue latine*, Alpha-Omega. Lexica, Indices, Konkordanzen zur klassischen Philologie 11 (Hildesheim, 1968); C.M. Birch, ed., *Concordantia et Index Caesaris. Concordance and Index to Caesar*, Alpha-Omega. Reihe A, Lexica, Indices, Konkordanzen zur klassischen Philologie C (Hildesheim, 1989); S. Preuss, *Vollständiges Lexicon zu den pseudo-caesarianischen Schriftwerken* (Erlangen, 1884).

[57] J. Hellegouarc'h, *Le vocabulaire latin des relations et des partis politiques sous la République* (Paris, 1963; reprinted 1972).

[58] Cf. M. Treu, "Clementia Caesaris," *MH* 5 (1948), 197–217; O. Leggewie, "Clementia Caesaris," *Gymnasium* 65 (1958), 17–36.

[59] W.H. Friedrich, "Caesar und sein Glück," *Thesaurismata. Festschrift für I. Kapp zum 70 Geburtstag* (Munich, 1954), 1–25, 165; E. Bickel, "Das Glück der Grossen. Caesarskönigplan und sein Glück," *Freundesgabe für W. Willi* (Bern, 1960), 65–75;

who were not the recipients of the same treatment or who simply had not aligned themselves with his own position. It is important to indicate that in Caesar's works *spes* does not always indicate a positive quality; this is particularly clear in the *Bellum Civile*,[60] while in the *Bellum Gallicum* it retains the meaning of positive expectation or hope.

The concept of *dignitas* is applied not only to his own person and especially to the defense of his actions,[61] but also to his enemies or even to barbarian peoples and leaders, a recognition that is transferred into a greater recognition for his own actions in these cases. The same occurs with the concepts of *gloria* and *honor*, which go beyond Caesar himself to become universal values, in a purely Roman concept, but applicable to any objective situation.

Evidently, another part of his lexis is less controversial, but nonetheless expressive and necessary for the impact of Caesar's account. As an example we can cite the well-studied terms for killing and dying in his work, which to a large extent are military technical expressions, as is the case of *cadere*, *amittere*, or *desiderari*.[62] Caesar's military vocabulary has also been the subject of specific studies,[63] which have enabled the coherence that he presents with the aim of emphasizing his self-representation as a tactically irreproachable military commander.

It may surprise some that I should discuss what has been described with a modern technical term as the *interpretatio Romana* in this section. This phenomenon, which can be understood as a transfer of features of other peoples to Roman concepts and realities, takes its name from a passage in the *Bellum Gallicum* (6.17), in which Caesar deals with the religion of the *Galli*. It is obvious that in this passage there is an attempt at explaining, which does not exactly correspond to the form

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C. Brutscher, "Caesar und sein Glück," *MH* 15 (1958), 75–83. See also J. Champeaux, *Fortuna. Recherches sur le culte de la Fortune à Rome et dans le monde romain des origines a la mort de César*, Collection de l'École Française de Rome, 64 (Rome, 1982/1987) 2:217–236, and also 253–255 for the effect of Sulla's *felicitas* on Pompey's political thought.

[60] Cf. A. Hackl, *Die spes als negativer Charakterisierungbegriff in Caesars Bellum civile* (DPhil., Innsbruck, 1963).

[61] R. MacMullen, *Feelings in History, Ancient and Modern* (Claremont, 2003), esp. ch. 1, "History in the Roman Republic," 1–50 and section 3, "Roman Writers," 23–36, where he identifies the value of *dignitas* in Caesar as a fundamental element of justification and defense, 28–59.

[62] Cf. I. Opelt, "Töten und Sterben in Caesars Sprache," *Glotta* 58 (1980), 103–119.

[63] As in L.C. Pérez Castro, "Notas sobre el vocabulario militar en los Comentarios Cesarianos de la Guerra civil," *CFC* 2 (1971), 257–277.

in which we now understand the phenomenon that is conventionally known as such. This is a text in which Caesar endeavors to give a view of the religion of the Galli by describing it with Roman parameters and gods so as to be understood better and to spark the curiosity of his readership, which might otherwise not have shown any interest or paid attention to a digression of an ethnological nature. When analyzing Caesar's resources as a historian, the phenomenon has been seen as a way of masking the truth or manipulating it,[64] although at the present moment it tends to be seen as a Roman way, well documented in other sources, of understanding an alien concept and making it their own.[65]

As far as military virtues—which obviously involve political consequences—are concerned, it is clear that *oportunitas* and *celeritas* are important characteristics, and they demonstrate a general's, and hence a leader's, speed and sharpness. *Consilium*, considered a capacity for planning and decision making, is further not an inconsiderable characteristic to be taken into account. In the same way that it is essential to possess the ability to obtain and receive information and to unleash a reaction, sometimes a drastic one, in response to it, this capacity is implied in expressions repeatedly used by Caesar, such as *certior factus est*, which introduce his actions with rigorous precision. The idea of *causa* is another of the leitmotifs that, in the eyes of the reader, justifiably sets off interventions; in this case, the frequent use of the preposition *causa* is even denotative in evaluating this aspect.

If to these characteristics are added certain other firm, constant points in the ideological propaganda,[66] such as *fortuna*, *clementia*, the *imperator's* mercy, the concentration of attention on the latter as a military leader with great capacity, and as a man, and on his almost legendary prestige, the ingredients for the popularity that were indispensable for Caesar's aims are achieved.[67]

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[64] As in M. Rambaud, *L'art*, 328–333.

[65] A good summary of this question can be found in G. Baratta, "Appunti sulle variabili e costanti dell'*interpretatio* religiosa nell'Occidente romano," in *Génese e consolidação da Ideia de Europa*, ed. F. de Oliveira, 3 (Coimbra, 2005), 123–134, esp. 124–126; for Caesar, see also F. Marco Simón, "Integración, interpretatio y resistencia religiosa en el occidente romano," in *La romanización en occidente*, eds. J.M. Blázquez and J. Alvar (Madrid, 1996), 217–238.

[66] Cf. on this aspect, J.H. Collins, "Caesar as Political Propagandist," *ANRW* 1.1 (Berlin, 1972), 922–966; C.E. Stevens, "The Bellum Gallicum as a Work of Propaganda," *Latomus* 11 (1952), 3–18, 165–169; F.H. Mustschler, *Erzählstil und Propaganda in Caesars Kommentarien* (Heidelberg, 1975).

[67] M. Rambaud, *L'art*, 243–293.

It is somewhat more complicated to go into more ideological and politically controversial issues beyond the text of Caesar himself. Such is the case of the concept of *libertas* that, regardless of his actions, Caesar proclaims to defend in accordance with the traditional Roman idea, which precisely implies considerable autonomy for the Senate in its functions together with its authority, which he professes he wants to maintain.[68] The apparent restoration and vindication of this *libertas* was seen to be the way leading to what others were to consider tyranny or a specific idea of *regnum*.[69]

Pursuing and maintaining his extraordinary charisma and the energy and persistence behind his actions, which together summarize the concept of *voluntas Caesaris*,[70] constitute another of the central aspects in which vocabulary and style complement each other for a sole purpose.

Style at the Service of the Expression of an Idea

As Quintilianus emphatically stated, Pompey was undoubtedly *abunde dissertus rerum suarum narrator*, like the great political figures of his time,[71] and Caesar must have faced them with comparable weapons; his *sermo imperatorius*, the *ratio eloquentiae* characteristic of emperors and of *triumphales*, as Quintilianus himself stated,[72] dominated the political expression of those closing years of the Roman *res publica*.[73] It is almost

[68] Cf. F. Cairns and E. Fantham, eds., *Caesar against Liberty? Perspectives on his Autocracy*, ARCA 43, *Papers of the Langford Latin Seminar* 11 (Cambridge, 2003), and esp. E. Gabba, "Caesar's Reforms," 183–189; M. Sordi, "Caesar's Powers in His Last Phase," 190–199; J.G. Nordling, "Bibliographical addendum," 201–220, offers a good selection of works for understanding the question. On the concept, cf. C. Wirszubski, *Libertas as a Political Idea at Rome during the Late Republic and Early Principate* (Cambridge, 1960), esp. 87–91.

[69] For these concepts and their relationship with Caesar's acts, cf. J. Béranger, "Tyrannus: Notes sur la notion de tyrannie chez les Romains; particulièrement à l'époque de César et de Cicéron," *REL* 13 (1935), 85–94 and also in general terms J. Béranger, *Principatus* (Geneva, 1973).

[70] Cf. L. Raditsa, "Julius Caesar," 430–431, following and commenting on N.D. Fustel de Coulanges.

[71] Quint. 11.1.36, in a passage in which he also recalls, *et hic qui bello civili se interfecit, Cato eloquens senator fuit*; and Dial., *De orat*. 37.60; cf. E. Norden, *Die Antike Kunstprosa*, 1:209–211.

[72] Quint. 11.1.36: *Imperatorum ac triumphalium separata est aliqua ex parte ratio eloquentiae*.

[73] Fronto, *Epist. ad amicos*, 2, 10; and *de bello Parthico*, 10.

impossible to evaluate and understand the meaning, and even the intentions, of Caesar's work without taking into account these factors.

The carefully chosen usage of straightforward vocabulary combined with stylistic clarity and concision clearly establishes the feeling that Caesar's acts were both transparent and rational, thereby helping to align those who became aware of them through his works with his position and answers. This involves an uncommon and extremely effective skill, which manages to impose certain criteria without seemingly forcing the facts through a swift, balanced succession of causes and results, in which some have claimed to discern, perhaps not unjustifiably, an alteration to the order of events, which in principle did not affect their veracity independent of this in order to achieve this appearance. This is one of the main procedures that some have claimed to identify in the system of historical distortion practiced by Caesar.[74] The other procedures singled out include: the disjunction of events, or pre-explanatory accounts that make the reader predisposed to accept the subsequent exposition of events offered by Caesar or his justification of the same; imprecision, rather than ambiguity; exaggeration, especially of numbers; distortion and dissimulation, which are far better known techniques and are undoubtedly made use of, even at times with dramatic effect, which contributes to persuading readers of the reality and exactitude of the events and sequences of actions that parade before their eyes. A simple rhetorical technique was thus used to establish and emphasize events with which it was intended to create an impact in the mindset of the target audience, in this case the Roman people.

The use of the very figures of Caesar's enemies, such as Vercingetorix himself,[75] in order to justify his difficulties or mistakes is an extraordinary technique used extremely skillfully.[76] At the same time, presenting enemies of considerable stature, such as the abovementioned Gaulish leader or the *Haedui*[77] or the *Helvetii*,[78] makes his actions and victories stand out even more and more meritoriously by means of contrast.

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[74] M. Rambaud, *L'art*, 97–242; the more recent work, M. Rambaud, *Autour de César, scripta varia* (Lyon, 1987), is also of interest.

[75] On this figure, see J. Harmand, *Vercingétorix* (Paris, 1984); M. Sordi, "La fine di Vercingetorige," *PP* 8 (1953), 17–25.

[76] M. Rambaud, *L'art*, 301–311. D.E. Koutroubas, *Die Darstellung des Gegner in Caesars Bellum Gallicum*, (DPhil., Heidelberg, 1972).

[77] On the *Haedui* see, for example, E. Thévenot, *Les Haedui n'ont pas trahi. Essai sur le relations entre le Éduens et César au cours de la Guerre de Gaules et particulièrement au cours de la crise de 52*, Collection Latomus 50 (Brussels, 1969).

[78] E. Taubler, "Bellum Helveticum," *eine Caesarstudie* (Zürich, 1924).

As has been shown, Caesar's style in his *Commentarii* is seemingly simple and aspires to other effects than the purely stylistic. Beneath this apparent simplicity, which avoids attracting attention to the language, he aims to emphasize a single figure: himself; he is always the protagonist, even, as we have seen, of events about which he is only informed.[79]

All his stylistic devices seem to focus on the same goal, which lies in combining simplicity and his role as protagonist, in order to achieve an impression of objectivity in the explanation of how events unfolded.[80] Naturally, it is almost unnecessary to point out that the use of the third person—as if Caesar were merely a character in the account, although the principal one—contributes to creating a distance between Caesar the protagonist and Caesar the author, which accentuates the impression of detachment. The device is by no means new, as it was used by the Greek historian Xenophon in the fourth century BC and is extremely efficacious in terms of form. However, it must be pointed out that Caesar manages to maintain this apparent objective distance even in direct speeches with great skill.[81] So perfectly did he succeed in doing that, for many centuries later tradition remained ignorant of his having been the author of these works even though the texts had been preserved.

As has been demonstrated, vocabulary and style are closely intertwined, and his choice of words is perfectly suited to the morphological, syntactic, and stylistic devices in which they are immersed, in a rhetorical usage that tends toward a diaphanous form of expression, hiding any possible artful device from the eyes of the readers. Similarly, a decided effort is made not to lose them in complicated descriptions of a technical nature, except in those cases where they are absolutely indispensable.[82] As is well known, the vocabulary employed is limited to some thirteen hundred words, with no concessions to Graecisms or popular language. From a syntactic and stylistic point of view, Caesar's language repeats constructions and avoids rhetorical devices in the name of expressive efficiency and in order to make his subject more understandable; in this way, he

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[79] For his style as a reflection of his personality, see L. Canali, *Personalità e stile di Cesare* (Rome, 1966[2]); P.T. Eden, "Caesar's Style. Inheritance versus Intelligence," *Glotta* 40 (1962), 74–117. In general terms, see J.-P. Chausserie-Laprée, *L'expression narratve chez les histoiriens latins. Histoire d'un style* (Paris, 1969).

[80] On the style, cf. D. Rasmussen, *Caesars Commentarii. Stil und Stilwandel am Beispiel der direkten Reden* (Göttingen, 1963).

[81] D. Rasmussen, *Caesars Commentarii*; G. Cipriani, *Cesare e la retorica dell'assedio*, London Studies in Classical Philology 16 (Amsterdam, 1986).

[82] Cf., for example, G. Pascucci, "Interpretazione linguistica e stilistica del Cesare autentico," *ANRW* 1.3 (Berlin, 1973), 488–522.

manages to give the impression of a simple description of almost annalistic nature. Parataxis is particularly effective in this case and is abundantly used, as is also the relative for conjunctive purposes. The impression that is sought is the one that we are presented with: a technically, juristically, and administratively precise description[83] that adopts the form of a list, not without a certain juridical appearance typical of those presented to the Senate, and which aspires to hide nothing, describing objective sequences of events in an attempt to be merely informative.

Caesar's style, however, does not lack dramatic features when the situation requires them, within a very restricted application of such devices, which are often justified because they focus attention on a specific point, which increases the propagandistic value of his texts.[84] It has been claimed that they exhibit increasing internal complexity as the work progresses, attributable to less care being devoted to their composition, a feature to be found in the *Bellum Gallicum* and which was to expand considerably in the *Bellum Civile*.

Holding opinions of this type involves seeing a state of affairs that cannot be proved. I am of the opinion that, when comparing the style of the two works definitely written by Caesar, we should bear in mind that their objectives are not the same and undoubtedly neither is the function; in the *Bellum Civile*, Caesar endeavors to present himself in a different light: not as a mere executor, even though he was the protagonist of a great conquest and a great task of pacification, but rather as a Roman magistrate who has defended his rights and what he believed to be fair within parameters that he considered to be legitimate. In this respect, we should remember that the three books of this work are far less elaborated than the *Bellum Gallicum* in a search for a direct, simple style and, moreover, that this work remained unfinished. However, it requires an enormous leap to go from here to believing, as has been proposed, that it is an outline, a draft, or a non-definitive version; although Suetonius' evidence informs us that the work did indeed remain unfinished,[85] this does not mean that the extant version, written and made public after the events, did not possess its definitive form, even though it has to be recognized that paragraphs 100–112 of Book 3 are apparently less

[83] E. Odelman, *Études sur quelques reflets du style administratif chez César* (DPhil., Stockholm, 1972).

[84] For this sometimes dramatic style, cf. F.-H. Mutschler, *Erzählstil und Propaganda in Caesars Kommentarien*, Heidelberger Forschungen 15 (Heidelberg, 1975).

[85] Suet., *Div. Iul.* 56.4.

developed and display some inconsistencies with the habitual form of Caesar's works. In fact, the real reason for the form in which the work has come down to us has been the subject of a wide range of conjectures.[86]

Nevertheless, it is clear that this apparent simplicity did not deceive his contemporaries, who interpreted it as an example of a different, but no less contrived, way of seeking to persuade in historical terms by means of a *brevitas*: a pure, uncontaminated form of language and an extraordinary skill at explaining his aims and objectives elegantly.[87]

It would obviously not be fair to use the same parameters to analyze either Aulus Hirtius' continuation or the rest of the so-called *corpus Caesarianum*, which follows its own paths and evolution with the concept of *imitatio* in mind, although this is not always successfully achieved.[88]

It is, however, clear that all these authors intended to continue Caesar's autobiographical work as if he himself, at least in the opinion of his continuators, had carried on writing it. In addition, a further important feature should also be emphasized: his continuators not only knew the events, but they also directly took part together with Caesar in the events narrated, which, to a certain extent, almost means that we are faced with a form of shared autobiography.

Aulus Hirtius, a Perhaps Somewhat Unskilled Continuator Serving the Memory of a Great Man

There can be no doubt that, in spite of intending to be a simple faithful *imitatio*, Book 8, added to the *Bellum Gallicum* by Aulus Hirtius, which covers the years 51 and 50 BC, presents several of the features of Caesar's own work, which Hirtius wanted to complete as a homage to his friend, whom he had accompanied in Gallia in the past, probably from 54 BC onward.[89]

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[86] P.M. Martin, "Le *Bellum civile* de César: oeuvre inachevée ou œuvre censurée?," in *Homenatge a Miquel Dolç. Actes del XII Simposi de la Secció Catalana i I de la Secció Balear de la SEEC*, eds. M.C. Bosch and M.A. Fornés (Palma de Mallorca, 1997), 305–324.

[87] As in Cic., *Brut*. 261–262, and Rhet. ad Heren. 4.12–17, for the *orationis formae* cf. A.D. Leeman, *Orationis ratio. Teoria e pratica stilistica degli oratori, storici e filosofi latini* (Bologna, 1974), 230–234, where he emphasizes *elegantia (pura), perspicuitas*, as well as *nuda et illustris brevitas* as essential characteristics of Caesar's *Commentarii*.

[88] Cf. as in H. Pötter, *Untersuchungen zum Bellum Alexandrinum und Bellum Africanum, Stil und Verfasserfrage*, (Leipzig, 1932).

[89] W. Dahms, *Curae Hirtianae*, (DPhil., Rostock, 1906 and Berlin, Progr., 1906) is still useful; in addition, W. von Hartel, "Die Caesarausgabe des Hirtius," in *Comment. Woelffl.* (Leipzig, 1891), 113–123; O. Seel, *Hirtius. Untersuchungen über die pseudocaesarischen*

Its structure is fundamentally based on the accumulative use of the lists or reports probably compiled by Caesar himself, and by Caninius, Fabius, and Marcus Antonius before continuing in a second part, after a second preface, with different items of news that had arrived from Rome, new reports by Caesar, and some reflections on his situation and popularity. The historical contents refer to the campaign against the Bellovaci, the account of the capture of Uxellodunum and the interventions destined to achieve definitive pacification.

The second preface is particularly indicative of Hirtius' thoughts as regards Caesar's work, since, although recognizing that it is structured by years, a feature that we must consider to be fundamental, in this case he decides to subsume two years in a single book because of the limited significance, in his opinion, of the actions in Gallia; but at the same time he wants to document and put on the historical record the presence of Caesar and his army in the area during that year. Without wanting to bring about a critical discussion of this point, it must be accepted that this second preface clearly reveals the varied aims of Hirtius' work, in which immediate propaganda no longer has any sense, and for which the distortion of events, or their order, to give them greater prominence would be revealed as being absolutely useless for direct political purposes. Perhaps we can even envisage that it was a voluntary deflation of the account of events in order to bring to a rapid close a work that was in all other respects unfinished; the desire to establish continuity and to offer a view of Caesar's activity is obvious, but the aim of the work is far from being the same, as it is reduced to being a historical view describing the events taking place.

The letter to Balbus, which as is well known forms the first preface to Book 8, is addressed to Lucius Cornelius Balbus of Gades, whose identity is well established;[90] it is without doubt pivotal for many of the hypotheses and conjectures concerning how the part of the *corpus*

Bella und den Balbusbrief (Leipzig, 1935); A. Klotz, *Caesarstudien* (Leipzig, 1919), 129; L. Canfora, *Storici della rivoluzione*, 27–40, for the letter to Balbus and the contents of Book Eight, considering the hypothesis that the letter might have been the work of a later compiler. For the *cursus honorum* of Aulus Hirtius, cf. *MRR* 2:334–336, and Index of Careers, 572; also *MRR* 3:102.

[90] *MRR* 2, Index of Careers, 550, and *MRR* 3:63.; J. Lamberty, "Amicis Caesaris. Der Auftieg des L. Cornelius Balbus aus Gades," in *Roms auswärtige Freunde in der späten Republik und in frühen Prinzipat*, ed. A. Coşkun (Gottingen, 2005), 155–173; cf. J.F. Rodríguez Neila, *Confidentes de César. Los Balbos de Cádiz*, (Cadiz, 1992[2], the title of the first edition is *Los Balbos de Cádiz. Dos españoles en la Roma de César y Augusto* [Sevilla, 1973]).

Caesarianum not written by Caesar should be interpreted, as will be seen in the corresponding section.

Balbus' insistence, *coactus adsiduis tuis vocibus*, is apparently the origin of Hirtius' undertaking; in addition, he describes his work as *difficillima res*: *Caesaris nostri commentarios rerum gestarum Galliae non conparentibus*[91] *superioribus atque insequentibus eius scriptis contexui novissimumque imperfectum ab rebus gestis Alexandriae confeci usque ad exitum non quidem civilis dissensionis, cuius finem nullum videmus, sed vitae Caesaris*. The explanation is clear and in a declaration of modesty stating how difficult it was for him to agree to intervene in Caesar's work and to what extent his action did not aim to be the object of *stultitiae et arrogantiae crimen*, this *excusatio* brings to a close the magnificent eulogy of Caesar as a writer: *erat autem in Caesare cum facultas atque elegantia summa scribendi, tum verissima scientia suorum consiliorum explicandorum*. The text of the book proper begins by clearly evoking the text of Book 1 of the *Bellum Gallicum*: *Omni Gallia devicta Caesar* ... On the basis of these elements, it is evident that Hirtius' aim was to complete Caesar's work, without competing with it, by emphasizing his own limitations, because he had not been an eyewitness of either the Alexandrine or the African wars and because for those aspects he therefore depended on Caesar's own documentation, which in any case was partial and incomplete for his purposes.

The heart of the issue lies in the real extent of Hirtius' work and in the decision as to whether it should be accepted or not that he had really tried to complete Caesar's work down to his death, in other words also beyond the point of the *Bellum Civile* at which the author left his work. If we rule out, as I am convinced must be the case, the possibility that Hirtius could have been the author of the last three *Bella* of the *corpus Caesarianum*, we must wonder whether this work has been lost, or whether this was a declaration of aims while he was actually writing a work that never saw the light of day, or whether, as has been proposed, that this is really chapters 100–112 of Book 3 of the *Bellum Civile*,[92] which precisely because of Hirtius' intervention in it was

[91] *Commentarios rerum gestarum [Galliae] non competentibus*, in the text of H. Meusel, *C. Iulii Caesaris comentarii de bello Gallico, with a commentary by F. Kraner and W. Dittenberger, and additions by H. Oppermann*, 3 (Berlin, 1960[18]), 1 and critical notes on 86, which give us an idea of the difficulty involved in establishing a text, on the subtleties upon which interpretations of the later work are dependent.

[92] This is accepted by N. Diuron in his edition, *Pseudo-César, Guerre d'Espagne* (Paris, 1999), ix, on the basis of the arguments of W. Hartel, *Commentationes Woelfflinianae*

to have its unfinished appearance. Furthermore, as will be seen in the appropriate section, the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, the *Bellum Africum*, and the *Bellum Hispaniense* each pose their own problems, which contribute to establishing a certain distance from Hirtius' work. To sum up, this is a further unsolved question as regards the Caesarian tradition, to which contributions should be made with a degree of prudence so as not to confuse reality with intentions or rhetorical forms of expression. However, I will mention in advance that there is no lack of arguments for disputing whether Hirtius was really responsible for composing Book 8 of the *Bellum Gallicum*, as will be seen in the following section.

A Faithful but Careless Continuation: The Non-Caesarian Works in the *Corpus Caesarianum: Bellum Alexandrinum, Bellum Africum, Bellum Hispaniense*

In recent years, the *Corpus Caesarianum* has provoked great interest over and above the controversies that raged at the end of the nineteenth century and in the opening years of the twentieth century as regards its attribution.[93]

The *editio princeps* of 1469 already pointed out in this respect: "… item Auli Hirtii aut Oppii, libri de bello Alexandrino, de bello Africo et de bello Hispano."[94] Their contents are very well known: the *Bellum Alexandrinum* is concerned with the events that took place between May and August 47 BC, the campaigns in Egypt, Armenia, and the western campaigns of Caesar's legates; the battle and victory of Zela in Asia brings this work to a close. The *Bellum Africum* or *Africanum* covers the events between October 47 BC and April 46 BC; it tells the story of Caesar's campaign against Pompey's supporters under Cato the Younger's command and concludes with Cato's suicide in Utica and Caesar's return to Rome. The *Bellum Hispaniense* deals with the war waged in Hispania against Pompey's followers and the series of victories, culminating in the description of the Battle of Munda.

(Leipzig, 1891), 115–116 and of A. La Penna, "Tendenze," 225–231. G. Pascucci, *[C. Iulii Caesaris] Bellum Hispaniense* (Florence, 1965), 17; W. Hering, *Bellum Gallicum* (Leipzig, 1987), V.

[93] J. Kroymann, "Caesar und das corpus Caesarianum in der neueren Forschung: Gesamtbibliographie 1945–1970," *ANRW* 1.3 (Berlin, 1973), 457–487.

[94] Cf. L.A. Constans, *César, Guerre des Gaules*, 1 (Paris, 1926), vi.

The survival of these works has led to a hotly debated question that is still far from being resolved and which has given rise to a wide range of disparate theories and hypotheses. As has already been noted, Aulus Hirtius' letter to Balbus lies at the root of this matter. Suetonius himself wondered whether to attribute them to Oppius or Hirtius.[95] If the presence of the author of each of these works in the campaigns carried out by Caesar is a decisive element, as has been claimed, it is obvious that Aulus Hirtius did not take part in the Alexandrian and African campaigns,[96] as can be inferred from a letter from Cicero (*Att.* 12) and that of Hirtius himself to Balbus, which acts as the prologue to Book 8 of the *Bellum Gallicum*; in spite of this fact, it has been considered probable that the *Bellum Alexandrinum* may have been written by Aulus Hirtius, making use of the supposed stylistic similarity as an argument. Neither did Oppius participate in either the African war or the Spanish one, so that he could not have been the author of these works if the abovementioned criterion is accepted.

There can be no doubt that the authorship of the *Bellum Alexandrinum* still remains in the uttermost anonymity, despite the names of the candidates proposed: Oppius, Pansa, Hirtius, Asinius Pollio, or Macer.[97] Asinius Pollio or Sallustius have also been suggested as the author of the *Bellum Africanum* without any reliable evidence.[98] As has already been pointed out, there are no reasons to believe that Hirtius brought together material written by Caesar in various states of elaboration and presented them to the public except in the case of the last book of the *Bellum Gallicum*, although some insist on continuing to attribute the *Bellum Alexandrinum* to him, however improbable this may seem.[99]

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[95] Suet., *Caes.* 56.1: *nam Alexandrini Africique et Hispaniensis incertus auctor est. Alii Oppium, alii Hirtium qui etiam Gallici belli novissimum imperfectumque librum suppleverit*.

[96] H. Pötter, *Untersuchungenzum Bellum Alexandrinum und Bellum Africanum*, (DPhil., University of Munster, Leipzig, 1932); see also the review by O. Seel in *Gnomon* 9 (1933), 594–600; O. Seel, *Untersuchungen über pseudo-cäsarischen Bella und der Balbusbrief* (; *Klio*, Beiheft XXXV; Leipzig, 1935).

[97] Cf. J. Andrieu, *César, Guerre d'Alexandrie* (Paris, 1954), ix, xvi–xliii, for this complex question, in which he concludes that the author must remain anonymous in the face of the impossibility of attributing the work to any one of the authors proposed.

[98] Cf. A. Bouvet, *Pseudo-César, Guerre d'Afrique* (Paris, 1997; new rev. ed. by J.-C. Richard, first ed. 1949), XXX–XXXVII.

[99] See, more recently, L.G.H. Hall, "Hirtius and the *Bellum Alexandrinum*," *CQ* (1996), 411–415, opposing A. Patzer, "Aulus Hirtius als Redaktor des Corpus Caesarianum: eine grammatish-historische Analyse der epistula ad Balbum," *WJA* 19 (1993), 122–130.

All the works forming part of the *corpus Caesarianum* that were not written by Caesar present a problem of authorship, which critics have aspired to solve in many ways although, I repeat once again, none of them are sufficiently convincing. However, there is no lack of reexaminations of the problem that re-analyze the possibility of Sallustius or Asinius Pollio having written the *Bellum Africum*,[100] and even the former's candidature for the authorship of the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, on the basis of G. Landgraf's theories.[101] Nevertheless, we should remember that H. Pötter claimed to see an incomplete work by Caesar in paragraphs 1–21 and 65–78 of the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, with practically all the rest being written by Hirtius, an opinion contested by other scholars.[102]

As the key to the question, once again we must insist that the interpretation of the contents of the preface by Aulus Hirtius to Book 8 of the *Bellum Gallicum*, also written by him, has given rise to all sorts of speculations, since he indicates that he plans to write on all Caesar's campaigns, explicitly mentioning the *res gestae Alexandriae* and intending to reach the *exitus civilis dissensionis*, which undoubtedly deceived Suetonius himself, who, as a result, supposed that the anonymous works in the

[100] Thus the *Bellum Africum* is attributed to Sallustius by H. Pötter, *Untersuchungen*, and also by W. Schmid, *Frühschriften Sallusts im Horizon Gesamtwerks* (Neustadt, 1993), 137–188, a position not accepted by J. Hellegouarc'h in his review of the work, *REL* 72 (1994), 290–291, against G. Landgraf (see the following note), who attributes it to Asinius Pollio.

[101] A good description of these controversial attributions and their development subsequent to the work by G. Landgraf, *Untersuchungen zu Caesar und seinen Fortsetzer insbesondere über Autorschaft un Komposition des Bellum Alexandrinum und Africanum* (Erlangen, 1888), can be found in A. Bouvet, *César, Guerre d'Afrique* (Paris, 1949), xvii–xxvi, esp. xviii n. 1. Cf. also J. Andrieu, *César, Guerre d'Alexandrie* (Paris, 1954), xvi–xliii; and now N. Diouron, *Pseudo-César, Guerre d'Espagne* (Paris, 1999), xv n. 22.

[102] See the criticism by J. Andrieu, "La dialectique de Pötter," in *César, Bellum Alexandrinum*, xxv–xxix. Andrieu's conclusion, in the face of the multiplicity of proposals (Caesar, Hirtius, Pollio, or Macer) is to maintain that it is impossible to attribute the work to any one author, beyond providing a thorough description of the characteristics of both the style and the personality of the possible author, who for the moment must remain anonymous (xliii). A similar position is adopted by J. Zingerle, "Zur Frage nach der Autorschaft des Bellum Alexandrinum und dessen Stellung im Corpus Caesarianum," *Wiener Studien* 14 (1892), 75–119. *Contra* L. Vielhaber, "Anzeige von F. Dübner, C. Julii Caesaris Commentarii de Bello Gallico," *Zeitschrift für die österreichen Gymnasien* 20 (1869), 541–576; E. Fischer, *Das 8. Buch vom gallische Kriege und das Bellum Alexandrinum* (Passau, 1880); and F. Fröhlich, "Realistisches uund Stilisches zu Caesar un seine Fortleben," *Festchrift des Philologisches Kränzchens in Zürich* (Zurich, 1887), 1–55. The proposal of Pompeius Macer as the author is proposed by W. Dahms.

corpus Caesarianum must have been attributable to him, a fact that is far from obvious according to the evidence of Hirtius' own words.[103]

The work of Hirtius as a continuator of Caesar has been studied in depth, and attempts have even been made to detect the procedures that he used for preparing his texts; for instance, it has been proposed that he brought together the reports of the legates in chapters 26–37 of Book 8 almost *expressis verbis*, only adding brief commentaries in the way that Caesar did[104] as an example of his compositional technique; and it has been claimed that he simply used texts left incomplete or as rough drafts by Caesar, as he himself points out. It is obvious that if it is accepted that original texts by Caesar existed, and served as a precedent for Aulus Hirtius' work, this possibility would also seem to be applicable to the rest of the *corpus Caesarianum* of uncertain attribution, and indeed this has been proposed.[105] It is clear that this is an easy solution: the rather unfortunate process of putting together the anonymous works in this *corpus* could be deduced to having been based on a combination of notes and reports written by Caesar himself with the legates' reports by means of a simple fusion technique, and by using language and a style imitating Caesar's own.

Ultimately, it might be supposed that we should, or rather we can, conclude—and this has been done by combining the data—that Aulus Hirtius could have been the one that commissioned the collection of the material for continuing Caesar's work and at the same time for preparing his own work, and that the results of this task of compilation, in different states of completion and by different authors, were none other than the *Bellum Alexandrinum* and the *Bellum Africum*,[106] works that Hirtius must have been prevented from further elaborating by his premature death at Mutina in 43 BC. It should also be remembered that Lucius Munatius Plancus[107] has been seen as the decisive element, if not the

[103] See the section considering Aulus Hirtius as a continuator of Caesar.

[104] M. Rambaud, *L'art*, 77–78; this is a procedure also to be found in the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, 78–81.

[105] M. Rambaud, *L'art*, 82–90; it is clear that this is a device used by Caesar himself, who often made use of their reports (90–96) with a list of passages.

[106] For instance, A. Bouvet, *Pseudo-César. Guerre d'Afrique*, XXIII–XXIV, following C. Nipperdey, *Quaestiones Caesarianae*, 34 (Leipzig, 1847), and K. Barwick, *Caesars Commentarii und das Corpus Caesarianum*, *Philologus*, Suppl. 31.2 (1938), 175–216; Barwick, *Problemen zu den Commentarii Caesars und seiner Forsetzer*, (*Forschungen und Fortschritte*) 15 (Berlin, 1935), 130–181; cf. also N. Diouron, *Pseudo-César, Guerre d'Espagne*, XI.

[107] E. Koestermann, "L. Munatius Plancus und das Bellum Africum," *Historia* 22

author, of the *Bellum Africum*, acting in the same way and in the same political circumstances as Aulus Hirtius. An attribution to Pompeius Trogus' father, the *Vocontius* Trogus, has also been put forward for this work, without having been widely accepted.[108]

The vulgarisms employed in the *Bellum Hispaniense*, together with its objectivity toward Caesar's supporters, mark it off from the other works and supposed authors.[109] The critical problems that this work creates are still numerous and the majority have not been resolved except as concerns questions of detail.[110]

As has repeatedly been emphasized,[111] authorship of the work has not been attributed to an illustrious name; the mediocre stylistic quality of the text may have played an important part in this respect. There have been disparate proposals, ranging from a certain *Arguetius*, identifiable with Clodius Arquitius, proposed by C. Kohl and contested by A. Klotz,[112] to an anonymous cavalry officer who took part in the military action and therefore had firsthand knowledge of the episodes of *Vlia*, *Corduba*, and *Ategua*, and who participated in the decisive Battle of Munda; subsequently, he must have followed Caesar, which explains why he only has limited details of the actions carried out by Fabius Maximus and by Gaius Didius, once Caesar was no longer present. From the

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(1973), 48–63, with an excellent analysis of the state of the question; also A. Pallavisini, "Il capitolo 22 del Bellum Africum e la propaganda augustea," *CISA* (1974), 107–114; cf. J.-C. Richard in the bibliographical appendix to the new edition of A. Bouvet, *Pseudo-César, Guerre d'Afrique* (Paris, 1997), lvii–lix.

[108] J. Harmand, "Des Gaulois autour de César," *RSA* 2 (1972), 158–165, bases his arguments on Ivst. 43.5.11: *in postremo libro Trogus ait maiores suos originem a Vocontiis ducere; avum suum Trogum Pompeium Sertoriano bello civitatem a Cn. Pompeio percepisse, patruum Mithridatico bello turmas equitum sub eodem Pompeio duxisse; patrem quoque sub C. Caesare militasse epistolarumque ac legationum, simul et anuli curam habuisse.* These are the lines that provide evidence for this conjecture.

[109] G. Pascucci, "Stile e lingua del Bellum Hispaniense," *Studi Urbinati* 24 (1950), 191–217.

[110] G. Pascucci, "Paralipomeni della esegesi e della critica al 'Bellum Hispaniense,'" *ANRW* 1.3 (Berlin, 1973), 596–630; and also by the same scholar, G. Pascucci, *Motivi di propaganda e aspetti ideologici dell'Hispaniense* (Florence, 1963), in addition to his edition, *[C. Iulii Caesaris] Bellum Hispaniense*. The studies, collected in *Julio César y Corduba: tiempo y espacio en la campaña de Munda (49–45 a. C.)*, eds. E. Melchor Gil, J. Mellado Rodríguez, and J.F. Rodríguez-Neila (Cordoba, 2005), are particularly important for the activity of Caesar and his supporters, especially in Baetica.

[111] N. Diouron, *Pseudo-César, Guerre d'Espagne*, xv.

[112] C. Kohl, (*Bayr. Bl. f.d. Gymn-Schlw* 60 [1924], 38–42), and A. Klotz, (*Kommentar zum Bellum Hispaniense* [Leipzig, 1927], 4–5) cit. by N. Diouron, *Pseudo-César, Guerre d'Espagne*, XV.

information that was employed, it has been deduced, and this is the fundamental element that differentiates this work from the others, that the author of the *Bellum Hispaniense* did not directly handle Caesar's material but rather summaries or dispatches.[113] Interest in cavalry matters has been considered an identifying feature of the author, and thus it has even been possible to conjecture that he might have been a *praefectus equitum*,[114] which only partially coincides with the hypothesis that he was a soldier in the ranks, put forward by F.E. Adcock, because of the limited knowledge of tactics and military strategy that is displayed in this work in his opinion.[115] Quintus Fabius Maximus and Quintus Pedius[116] have also been proposed as authors, although without any great impact, because they had been present at the events.[117] There can be no doubt that G. Pascucci's suggestion is particularly interesting: this scholar puts forward the idea that he must have been a member of the *legio X*, who also participated in the *Bellum Africum*, as can be deduced from the account of the Battle of Munda.[118]

Nevertheless, the most plausible currently sustained position is that, since Hirtius is unlikely to have intervened in the writing of either the *Bellum Africum* or the *Hispaniense*, after his death Balbus could have appointed officers who are unknown to us to write their works independently of each other; this would explain the pronounced stylistic differences.[119] This is an attractive hypothesis that has the advantage of conciliating almost all the deductions that it has been possible to derive

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[113] M. Rambaud, *L'art*, 89–90 was also inclined to accept this idea, and it was likewise noticed by E. Norden, *Die antike Kunstprosa*, 1:211 for the lack of maturity in the *Bellum Hispaniense*.

[114] R.H. Storch, "The Author of the De Bellum Hispaniensi: a Cavalry Officer?," *Acta Classica* 20 (1977), 201–204.

[115] F.E. Adcock, "Caesar's Dictatorship," in *Cambridge Ancient History*, 9 (Cambridge, 1955), 691–740, esp. 703.

[116] *MRR* 2, Index of Careers, 563 and 599, respectively; cf. *MRR* 3, 87 for Fabius Maximus.

[117] In this respect, A.J.L. Van Hooff, "The Caesar of the Bellum Hispaniense." *Mnemosyne* 27 (1974), 123–138.

[118] G. Pascucci, *[C. Iulii Caesaris] Bellum Hispaniense*, 26 and 326. Similar ideas were expressed by A. Klotz, *Kommentar zum Bellum Hispaniense*, 97, who envisaged the author as having been a soldier who was in the left flank, where the Legio V was located. On all these hypotheses, cf. N. Diouron, *Pseudo-César, Guerre d'Espagne*, xv–xvii.

[119] As in N. Diouron, *Pseudo-César, Guerre d'Espagne*, xi; on the style of the *Bellum Hispaniense*, lxx–xc, and on the differences between it and the other continuations of Caesar's works, cf. L. Canali, "Osservazioni sul *corpus* cesariano," *Maia* 18 (1966), 115–137, esp. 125–129.; also, Canali, "Problemi della prefazione irziana," *Maia* 17 (1965), 125–140; Canali "Osservazioni sul *corpus* cesariano," *RCCM* 47 (2006), 267–281.

from Hirtius' *epistula* to Balbus. However, it would clearly imply that documents drafted by Caesar had existed and acted as precedents for both works, as has also been supposed for the *Bellum Alexandrinum*, of which, in spite of everything, Hirtius continues to be considered as a possible author. In addition, it offers the advantage that these unknown writers must have been eyewitnesses to the events.

If, as L. Canfora claims,[120] the *epistula ad Balbum* is a later forgery created on the basis of Suetonius' evidence and Cicero's *Brutus* (252 and 262), the issue would be resolved as Hirtius would disappear as an author and Book 8 of the *Bellum Gallicum* would once again be attributable to Caesar, which, in the opinion of some, is not impossible on stylistic grounds.[121] Moreover, in favor of this hypothesis, it cannot be overlooked that Book 8 is favorable to Marcus Antonius. However, I find it difficult to be seduced by this extremely intelligent possibility, even though it is supported by the facts that the *epistula* in question contributes hardly any new information to the issue, that the figures are known to have been close associates of Caesar's, and that it is of schoolboy-like nature in its historical and aesthetic observations; nevertheless, at the same time it must be recognized that nothing in the known tradition leads us to doubt its genuine nature, at least until as far back in time as this tradition can be traced.

The question remains open and, naturally, as we have seen, the *Bellum Hispaniense* continues to be a case apart,[122] to which, besides, can be added the fact that it is almost unanimously considered to be one of the worst works of Latin literature.[123] However, it is both interesting and instructive to note how, ultimately, the theories put forward at the end of the nineteenth century continue to be valid when it comes to discussing these thorny issues.

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[120] L. Canfora, "La 'lettera a Balbo' e la formazione della raccolta cesariana," *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa*, 3.23 (1993), 79–103, esp. 89–93; Canfora, "Cesare continuato," *Belfagor* 25 (1970), 419–429, esp. 426–427. Cf. N. Diouron, *Pseudo-César, Guerre d'Espagne*, xii–xiii.

[121] Cf. M.F. Buffa, "Struttura e stile di B.G. VIII," *SRIC* 7 (1986), 19–49.

[122] For other points of view, see A. Klotz, *Kommentar zum bellum Hispaniense* (Leipzig, 1927). Once again, it is important to remember N. Diouron, ed., *Pseudo-César, Guerre d'Espagne*, vii–xvii, where he reconsiders the questions surrounding the authorship of the *corpus Caesarianum*.

[123] Cf. N. Diouron, ed., *Pseudo-César, Guerre d'Espagne*, lxxxiii, who, however, recognizes the merit of its energy, all the same without attributing any artistic value to it.

By Way of Epilogue

When it comes to analyzing the transmission or *traditio* of Caesar's works, their "ill-fated star" is somewhat surprising.[124] Perhaps the principal factor in this strange misfortune has been the fact that for many centuries the fame of the figure was separated from that of his work, which, although it was preserved, was attributed to others even in antiquity, as has been seen in the previous section: Orosius' mistake had far-reaching consequences for subsequent centuries.[125]

Latin historians knew his works and employed them as historical documents; we have evidence for this being done by Titus Livius, who was politically hostile to him and who, to a certain extent and perhaps without wanting to, was to render Caesar's historical output unnecessary. Tacitus appraised it extremely positively, but did not imitate him; Suetonius paid attention to him in his biography, as a historical figure, as did Plutarch, Cassius Dio, Appian, and Ammianus Marcellinus. The poet Lucanus may well also have been aware of it. Subsequently, the extant manuscripts provide us with knowledge and proof of the destiny of both Caesar and his works, since, when they ceased to be attributed to him, his output was to continue being transmitted as a history of Caesar the historical figure even though his authorship, and hence the fact that it represented his own version of events, was not. Orosius was to attribute it to Suetonius, and the evidence of the latter on the *corpus Caesarianum* was to be a determinant of the entirety of Caesar's output being attributed to Aulus Hirtius or Oppius. When Petrarch wrote his *De gestis Caesaris*, he used the *Bellum Gallicum* and the *Bellum Civile* as his main sources, without suspecting that Caesar himself was hiding behind both of them.[126]

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[124] As in M. Schanz and C. Hosius, *Geschichte der römischen Literatur*, 1:346: "Ueber die Schriften Caesars waltete kein günstiger Stern."

[125] Oros. 6.7.

[126] Cf. now the edition of G. Crevatin, *F. Petrarca, De gestis Caesaris* (Pisa, 2003). For the tradition that came down to the Renaissance, see, for example, M.H. Mira Mateus, ed., *Vida e feitos de Júlio César* (Lisbon, 1970), which edits the fifteenth-century Portuguese version of the French original, *Li Fet des Romains*; cf. also A.A. do Nascimento, "Nota mínima a 'Vida e Feitos de Júlio Cesar,'" in *Razões e Emoção—Miscelânea de estudos em homenagem a Maria Helena Mira Mateus*, 2 (Lisbon, 2003), 157–166; and for the Spanish tradition, I. Beceiro Pita, "César ancestro de la nación hispana y espejo de caballeros," *Euphrosyne* 31 (2003), 369–378. Cf. also J. Leeker, *Die Darstellung Cäsars in den romanischen Literatur des Mittelalters* (Frankfurt am Mein, 1986).

As E. Norden pointed out,[127] his works were, because of feelings of nationalism or patriotism, of interest to Paulinus de Nola, who was curious about the history of Gallia since he had been born in Burdigala, and also to Sidonius Apollinaris, who believed in the attribution to Suetonius, for similar reasons.[128]

In his biography of Caesar, Suetonius echoes the criticism that the work aroused in his own time;[129] we are well informed about the attacks that it received from Asinius Pollio, who harshly stressed its inaccuracies, as did other individuals whom we might include among the *obtrectatores Caesaris*, although it is obvious that not all the criticism in his time was negative.[130] Alongside those that denigrated his output, there were others that were able to appreciate it and its style. Nonetheless, as has already been mentioned, it must be said that Caesar's literary memory was conditioned by appreciation of him as an excellent orator, a point already present in Cicero, which, for example, is used exclusively as opposed to his historical work in the case of Quintilianus' influential work.[131] The characteristics of his prose led it to be of little interest to the grammarians with the result that, from this point of view, his works went unnoticed, although some scholastics paid attention to them because of the contents. They were at least partially translated into Greek, as seems to be proved by the knowledge that the Byzantine Maximus Planudes, who lived at the turn of the fourteenth century, had of the *Bellum Gallicum*.

The motto of the "Valentine" Cesare Borgia, *Cum nomine Caesaris omen*, reveals appreciation for the figure of Caesar at the beginning of the early modern period. It is clear that this special significance of Caesar continued to be present in European culture throughout the Enlightenment, the French Revolution and the Romantic period, and individuals of such intellectual importance as Voltaire, Herder, or Alfieri echoed the

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[127] Cf. E. Norden, *Die Antike Kunstprosa* 2:578–580.

[128] Sid., Apoll. *Ep*. 9.14.7.

[129] Suet., *Caes*. 56.4.

[130] H. Strasburger, *Caesar im Urteil seiner Zeitgenossen*, (Libelli) 158 (Darmstadt, 1968^2) = *Historische Zeitschrift* 175 (1953), 225–264. Cf. also J. André, *La vie et l'oeuvre de C. Asinius Pollio* (Paris, 1949), 98–101.

[131] Quint., *Inst. or*. 10.1.38, for example, emphasizes Caesar's quality as an orator, citing Cicero's *Brutus*, although he sometimes provides examples derived from events in the campaigns undertaken by Caesar; in addition, we should remember the eulogy that compared him to Cicero, *Inst. or*. 10.1.114: *C. vero Caesar si foro tantum vacasset, non alius ex nostris contra Ciceronem nominaretur*.

Brutus-Caesar confrontation when dealing with the opposition between freedom and tyranny.[132]

The *Geschichte der römischen Litteratur* (*History of Roman Literature*) by M. Schanz and C. Hosius provides an excellent synthesis of these questions and covers the erudite and academic tradition, above all in central Europe, in subsequent centuries.[133] Works such as that of F. Gundolf,[134] which, as has somewhat justifiably been said, interpreted Caesar as a "superman" in accordance with his philosophical filiation derived from F. Nietzsche, enable us to see the trajectory and presence of Caesar as a literary character, with particular emphasis on the medieval view of him and the preponderant role of "Caesarism"—of the imperial idea—as a form of power that was present in the mind of writers such as Dante Alighieri.[135] The leading role of Caesar in the nineteenth century is defined by other parameters: the first of them represents continuity in the appreciation of Caesar as a figure, as a central element in a conception of evolving European values;[136] on the other hand, at that moment there arose a clear distinction between the symbolic figure and the historical one and his works, which started to be studied scientifically, leaving aside his meaning for contemporary society with the aim of being objective and unbiased. In spite of that, a parallel tendency inevitably continued to combine these scientific advances as regards knowledge of Caesar with comparisons with contemporary men and events.[137] It proved difficult to overcome such temptations, since the figure's significance is fundamental to the European conception of power and politics over and above other cultural implications; objective analysis thus becomes both arduous and complicated, because of the widespread nature of the phenomenon and its multiplicity of forms, although it is clearly possible.[138]

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[132] Cf. A. Rostagni, "Cesare nella storia della cultura," in *Cesare nel bimillenario della morte* (Rome, 1956), 215–228, esp. 225.

[133] M. Schanz and C. Hosius, *Geschichte der römischen Literatur*, 1:346–351, esp. 346–347.

[134] F. Gundolf, *César*, 89–246, esp. 103, for example.

[135] D. Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy* 4:49–51, 7:55–72.

[136] Once again we can offer as an example the work by F. Gundolf, *César*, 246–305, esp. 247.

[137] As in, to limit myself to one meaningful example, U. Silvagni in the dedication of his *Giulio Cesare* (Turin, 1930) to the memory of Armando Diaz, the Italian hero of the First World War 1914–1918, and in the "Avvertimento necessario," ix–xxix, which precedes the work, in which he makes the emphasis and the political aim of the work clear.

[138] See, for example, the excellent contributions to the volume *Cesare nel bimillenario della morte* (Rome, 1956), which brings together the conversations broadcast by Italian radio in the first few months of 1956 to commemorate the occasion; cf. very

Still today this admiration, colored with curiosity and legend, keeps alive the memory of an immortal figure in literature and history, but above all in the collective mindset of Western civilization and of those taking their first steps in it: Gaius Iulius Caesar, the man who did not want to be either *Felix* or *Magnus*, for whom it sufficed to be Caesar.

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especially the contributions of A. Rostagni, "Cesare nella storia della cultura," 215–228, and A. Momigliano, "Per un riesame della storia dell'idea di Cesarismo," 229–243, for the subjects I am referring to.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

THE AUGUSTAN AGE

Joseph Geiger

The Augustan Age is appropriately so called also as far as autobiography is concerned. Though neither the time of the first invention of the genre nor that of its highest accomplishment and influence, it became a benchmark of the era. The chief reason for this newly gained importance was the fact that the writing of autobiographies and memoirs in this period cannot be divorced from the example set by the First Citizen. As it happened Augustus himself wrote his *Autobiography* at still a relatively young age; even by then his achievements were formidable and obviously he was not to know that he had arrived only at the halfway mark of his life and that decades of further successes and triumphs were destined for him. Thus already at this early stage of the New Dispensation both the model to follow and the subject to reveal clearly stood out.

For indeed, the manner of writing that followed in the wake of the revelations (and concealments) of the Princeps was twofold. On the one hand, those closest to him in position and rank thought it incumbent on them to make known their own version of the events and the part they played in the great revolution that had taken place (albeit under the guise of the Restoration of the Old Order); on the other hand, some persons of often far less elevated status whose physical closeness to Augustus enabled them to add details not otherwise published to the life story and the character of the Princeps used the opportunity and composed memoirs containing such minutiae as they were able to contribute to the apparently endless public thirst for fact and fiction. Beside these must also be set the similarly intentioned memoirs of persons close to the other main actors of the great drama of the end of the Republic and the initiation of the Principate, such as Mark Antony. Of course such memoirs of followers and hangers-on were well known in the last generation of the Republic—one may be reminded of Munatius Rufus, the trusted companion of Cato the Younger and the ultimate source of the one surviving

ancient biography dedicated to him[1]—but in the Augustan Age they seem to have attained a hitherto unknown proliferation. And of course we have all learned the lesson from a famous letter by Cicero (*Fam.* 5.12) that one could at least attempt to make somebody else compose the preferred version of events and give due prominence to one's person and actions.

Needless to say all this was not new: the self-glorification of the Roman aristocracy was one of the main tools in the intense political contests of the Republic,[2] and the great nobles employed both themselves and some of their clients in various ways to promote their image, from the dedication of temples and public buildings to the erection of statues, from funeral processions and speeches emphasizing the candidate's *dignitas* to the much coveted triumphal procession, from clients queuing for the matutinal *salutatio* to poets in the inner circle (if not directly in the employ of the Great). The addition of autobiographies and memoirs was just one more, even though highly sophisticated, step forward on the same path. What is of the essence, however, is the fact that in Rome these literary genres, like so much else, were never and could never be divorced from history and politics.

To these general considerations a weighty literary circumstance should be added. The very outset of the Augustan Age evidenced the first instance known to us of the biography of a living person, namely Nepos' *Life of Atticus* (Nepos, *Att.* 19.1). Such a biography is obviously close to autobiography because of the shared incidence of the subject, even though the two genres differ from each other in the person of the author. Biographies of living persons are also close to autobiographies in that they fail in one part of their definition: they do not describe the life of a person from birth to death, and thus they miss the all-important closure prevailing in most of the genre. It may well be that this was a new biographical trend and not a chance occurrence or a freak of survival. At any rate, it is not to be known how many, if any, of the seven hundred persons portrayed in Varro's *Hebdomades* were living contemporaries, though given the great number to be included such a practice should not come as an absolute surprise. (Admittedly, none of the very few personages attested as belonging to Varro's work is known to be a contemporary.) In any case, it is of perhaps more than incidental

[1] See J. Geiger, "Munatius Rufus and Thrasea Paetus on Cato the Younger," *Athenaeum* 57 (1979), 48–72 [and ch. 5 above].

[2] For this intensity, see A. Yakobson, *Elections and Electioneering in Rome. A Study in the Political System of the Late Republic*, Historia Einzelschriften 128 (Stuttgart, 1999).

interest that in Asinius Pollio's library the only bust belonging to a living contemporary was that of Varro.[3] Such a procedure was not to remain unique. Good reason exists to believe that in the great assemblage of the statues of heroes in the *Forum Augustum* there were, in all probability, also some belonging to living persons: almost certainly that of Tiberius, quite probably of some women of the family of the Princeps, and perhaps of some others.[4]

However, and to return to biographies of living persons, the most famous instance of the age is the *Life of Augustus* himself written by Nicolaus of Damascus. Nicolaus, of course, will be considered later in this chapter both as the author of an autobiography and in connection with the memoirs of his patron, King Herod. Though his *Life of Augustus* is not part of the present discussion—its connections with the *Autobiography* of the Princeps will be treated in its proper place[5]—it is perhaps in his work that the relationship between autobiography and biography of a living person comes best to the fore. Though in this case the sequence seems clear enough, one should beware of taking this as a rule. Quite possibly both autobiography and biography of living persons were just emanations of the same *Zeitgeist*. Nor is this surprising: given the growing interest in character, on the one hand, and people's involvement—if not actively at least as passive objects—in the great events of the age on the other, one would expect nothing less than such manifestations. Thus a hypothesis may be hazarded: while the Hellenistic Age, more often than not, assembled canons of the great men (and sometimes women) of the past, the Augustan Age showed evidence also of a growing interest in contemporary figures. This increased interest may be attributed, in part at least, to a sense of living in a pivotal age, as against the regard of the Hellenistic age for the greatness of a bygone era.

All this should by no means create the impression that we are now to discuss a wealth of literary works that will enable us to describe in detail and properly to assess the production of the age. Sadly, nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, the yield of the industrious gathering of scattered fragments is, as so often in antiquity, only a few, mostly minute *disiecta membra*, to be assembled and prepared by tedious work and—does one have to deny it?—some imagination. Nevertheless, the general

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[3] Plin., *Nat. His.* 7.115: *unius viventis posita imago est*.

[4] See J. Geiger, *The First Hall of Fame. A Study of the Statues in the Forum Augustum* (Mnem. Suppl.) 295 (Leiden, 2008), 107–115 and *passim*.

[5] See ch. 8 below.

trends of the age referred to above should enable us to construct more than just a fleeting impression of the literary produce we are about to consider. First and foremost in our considerations of autobiography in the Augustan Age should be the man next to the Princeps, his closest friend in hardship and success, his right-hand man—in fact the Second Man in the state, if there were room for a Second next to the First Citizen. M. Vipsanius Agrippa, admiral and administrator, adviser and man of action, builder and diplomat, and eventually also the Princeps' son-in-law and father of his destined heirs[6] was also the author of an autobiographical work. It is this very fact, rather than the pitiful remains of that composition, that carries the greatest weight. Even without any further connections with the autobiography of the Princeps—for which more anon—the existence of such a work would suffice to establish a close link between the designs of the two comrades.

This is not the place to review the celebrated career of Agrippa, and the briefest of brief summaries shall suffice. A coeval of Octavian he returned with him from Greece to Rome after the assassination of Caesar and stood at his side during the following tumultuous events. In 38 he was governor of Gaul, and in 37 consul for the first time. In that year he made preparations for the war against Sex. Pompeius, whom he defeated in the following one. After a remarkable aedileship in 33 he played a vital part in the campaign of Actium, and after that decisive battle and the conquest of Egypt he shouldered, together with Maecenas, the administration of Italy during the absence of Octavian; he was the latter's colleague in the critical consulships of 28 and 27, the so-called First Settlement. Between 23 and 21 he arranged the affairs of the East from Mytilene, and in 19 dealt with a rebellion in Spain. He shared Augustus' *tribunicia potestas* from 18 on and received an *imperium maius*, the combined powers of the two no doubt marking him as the heir designate to the Princeps; after a second journey to the East he died on his way back from a mission in Pannonia in 12. Agrippa also had close family ties with his lifelong friend: his second wife was the latter's niece, Marcella, whom he divorced in order to marry Augustus' only daughter, Julia, when she was widowed from Marcellus; their two eldest sons, Gaius and Lucius, adopted by Augustus, became his designated heirs. In public buildings and generally in works for the Roman people, he was, like in everything else, second only to the Princeps.

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[6] See J.-M. Roddaz, *Marcus Agrippa* (Bibl. Ec. Fr. D'Ath. et de Rome) 253 (Rome, 1984).

Of interest for our present purposes is the little we know about the education of Agrippa and the somewhat more copious material at our disposal for his intellectual pursuits. We are told that the close friends have been educated together (Nic. Dam., *v. Caes*. 16), and in fact at the time of the assassination of the Dictator Caesar they are found at the same time at Apollonia (Suet., *Aug*. 94.12), no doubt in order to put the finishing touches on their education. That the foremost concern of such an upper-class education of the time was rhetoric goes without saying. Nevertheless, the anecdote told on that occasion of their approaching the astrologer Theogenes may perhaps indicate some wider interests. At any rate, a very short time after their return to Rome Agrippa was to put his rhetorical skills to the test when asked by Octavian to prosecute Cassius while L. Cornificius was to prosecute Brutus (Plut., *Brut*. 27.3; Vell., 2.69.5). There is also some positive evidence that in later life, too, he did not neglect rhetoric: a knowledgeable critic quotes from a "magnificent speech" by him (Plin., *Nat. His*. 35.26), and the purpose of the *Agrippeion* he built at Athens may have been the practice of rhetoric[7]—possibly a disclosure of his enduring interest in the subject.

However, the best-known intellectual enterprise of Agrippa is his plan for the description of the world exhibited in the *porticus Octaviae* (Plin., *Nat. His*. 3.17). Whether this was to be a map accompanied by a commentary, or, as has been more recently proposed, only a textual description may be left here an open question.[8] In any event, it is difficult to imagine the conception of such a work without the appropriate understanding of at least some of both the technical and theoretical geographical writings of the Greeks. Indeed, support for the assumption that in the mind of Agrippa there was no rigid separation between action and theory is furnished by his attitude to works of art. He did not only contribute much to the public display of works of art in Rome (see n. 13 below), but also delivered a speech—as a matter of fact the abovementioned "magnificent speech"—divulging his opinion that works of art should be displayed in public rather than hidden away in the homes of the wealthy.[9] One

[7] See Philostr., *VS* 2.5 p. 571, 2.8 p. 579 fin.

[8] See discussion in D. Dueck, *Strabo of Amasia. A Greek Man of Letters in Augustan Rome* (London, 2000), 127–129.

[9] Plin., *Nat. His*. 35.26 … *M Agrippa, vir rusticitati propior quam deliciis. Exstat certe eius oratio magnifica et maximo civium digna de tabulis omnibus signisque publicandis, quod fieri satius fuisset quam in villarum exilia pelli*. It seems to be the plain meaning of the passage that the splendor of the speech pertained to its contents rather than to its form.

wonders whether this was a genuinely felt opinion, commendable and modern even by present-day criteria, or a popular measure meant to endear him to the Roman plebs. In the former case it may be seen as an undertaking meant to educate—and given the practical character of Agrippa, hardly one that he would expect to be met with serious resistance. In the latter case, which perhaps may be the less likely one, we would learn an overlooked fact about the already existing cultural attitudes of the Roman masses.

Listing Agrippa's authorial exploits we may add to the speeches and the world map a composition concerning the aqueducts (Frontin., *aq.* 98) and proceed to the discussion of the *Autobiography*. Its miserable remains consist of three fragments, two preserved by Pliny the Elder and one in the commentary on the *Georgics* I by Servius Auctus. Whether *de vita sua* was its title or its description by the commentator cannot be known for certain; what we do know is that it consisted of at least two books. However, the extent of the work cannot have been very great, since the second book reached already the events of Agrippa's aedileship in 33,[10] thus leaving fewer than two books to youth, the assassination of Caesar and the civil wars and reconciliations with Antony, the war with Cassius and Brutus, the one against Sex. Pompeius, as well as all the other important occurrences of the late forties and the thirties. The earliest event, attested by the author as eyewitness, is the campaign of Philippi and it relates to the fortunes of Octavian.[11] Since the names of the witnesses, Agrippa and Maecenas, are joined by *ac*, and since no writing of the latter of a fitting literary genre is known,[12] it is perhaps best to take this as a single reference and assume that Agrippa quoted Maecenas as supplying orally a supporting witness.[13]

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[10] Serv. Auct. ad Verg. *G.* 2.162 (*HRR* fr. 2): *Agrippa in secundo vitae suae dicit excogitasse se, ut ex Lucrino lacu portum faceret. verum huius gloria Augusto cessit.*

[11] Plin., *Nat. His.* 7.147 (*HRR* fr. 1): *Philippensi proelio morbidi fuga et triduo in palude aegroti et, ut fatentur Agrippa ac Maecenas, aqua subter cutem fusa turgidi latebra.*

[12] I find it preferable to attribute the notice concerning the campaign of Philippi to one of the friends only with quoting the other as supporting witness than both to assume some non-historical writing of Maecenas as source and to believe that this single notice relating to Augustus was quoted from it, as Peter (*HRR*, 2:LXXVI–LXXVII) would have it. Moreover, Augustus had a very low opinion indeed of Maecenas' prose; see Suet., *Aug.* 86: *[Augustus sprevit exagitabatque] in primis Maecenatem suum, cuius myrobrechis, ut ait, cincinnos usque quaeque persequitur et imitando per iocum irridet*, and cf. J. Griffin, "Augustus and the Poets: 'Caesar qui cogere posset,'" in *Caesar Augustus. Seven Aspects*, eds. F. Millar and E. Segal (Oxford, 1984), 195–196.

[13] There is absolutely nothing to support the suggestion of R.G. Lewis, "Imperial Autobiography Augustus to Hadrian," *ANRW* 2.34.1 (1993), 690, that the notice came

The expertise in technical aspects that was surely integral to the great geographical work is safely attested in what remains of the *Autobiography*. We have seen the reference to the joining of the Lucrine Lake to the sea in the aedileship, and the last fragment gives copious details about the building and development in his aedileship of the *Aqua Virgo*.[14] Though we cannot be absolutely certain, it seems best not to take the *commemoratio* of his aedileship as a separate composition, but rather as the descriptive reference to a part of the *Autobiography*—conceivably a very substantial part, out of proportion perhaps with the relation of other events. Possibly it is not insignificant that the only other fragment not connected with the aedileship provides us with a glimpse of the intimate relationship between Agrippa and Augustus during the campaign of Philippi. Unfortunately, the fragment is quoted in such a manner that there is no telling by it alone whether Agrippa defended here his friend against charges of cowardice in describing his exact circumstances during the campaign or whether he was revealing some otherwise unknown and unpleasant facts about him. It is only by our general assessment of their relationship, rather than from the fragment itself, that we should opt for the former possibility.

Nothing safe can be securely deduced from these three surviving fragments about the style of the work, unless one chooses to refer the Elder Pliny's judgment (*Nat. His.* 35.26 … *M. Agrippa, vir rusticitati propior quam deliciis*) also to this composition. The little we were able to ascertain about the *Autobiography* only increases our curiosity concerning its connection with the composition in the same genre of Augustus. It appears that the only practical method to approaching this question leads by way of discussing the time of writing, since in the case of Augustus at least we are treading on fairly safe ground in this matter.[15] For Agrippa's reminiscences the obvious dates—of little help themselves—lie between the last recorded events of his aedileship in 33 and his death in 12. This range, however, may be considerably narrowed down. The crowded events

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from "a dialogue between Agrippa and Maecenas and written by the latter could be the ultimate source for this item."

[14] Plin., *Nat. His.* 36.121 (*HRR* fr. 3): *Agrippa vero in aedilitate adiecta Virgine aqua ceterisque conrivatis atque emendatis lacus septingentos fecit, praeterea salientes quingentos, castella centum triginta, complura et cultu magnifica, operibus iis signa trecenta aerea aut marmores imposuit, columnas e marmore quadringentas, eaque omnia annuo spatio. Adicit ipse aedilitatis suae commemoratione et ludos diebus undesexaginta factos et gratuita praebita balinea centum septuaginta, quae nunc Romae ad infinitum auxere numerum.*

[15] See discussion below, ch. 8.

following the aedileship, including the final break with Antony, the campaign of Actium and the conquest of Alexandria, the stewardship of Italy and the return of Octavian to Rome, his triumph and the so-called "Second Settlement" of 28–27,[16] including the granting of the name Augustus, would hardly leave spare time for contemplation and for literary activities.

It seems then best to assume that the years of the Eastern command spent at Mytilene (23–21) would provide both the relative leisure and the appropriate distance for reflection and summation. This, then, would also provide a tentative closing date for the work. In any case, it would be absurd not to bring the *Memoirs* of the two companions into the closest possible connection. Nevertheless, as in the case of their exact relationship, we are reduced to guesswork and to the game of (imagined or more well-established) probabilities. Was it Augustus who first thought of such a composition, and if so, was Agrippa's venture an amendment meant to claim his share in the events, or was it conceivably the other way around? Another possibility, of course, is a joint and contemporaneous decision of the friends.[17] Be this as it may, it should be noted that Agrippa's *Memoirs* did not harm their relationship as may be seen, for example, from the sharing of the tribunician powers from 18 on and, in the event, from Augustus' funeral speech for his lifelong friend. One may sum up this section with the conclusion that, given Agrippa's position, one suspects that the almost complete loss of his *Autobiography* has despoiled us from one of the best vantage points for the working of the Augustan Principate.

If there could be no doubt as to who was the second man in the state, albeit far behind the first, the competition for third place must have been very fierce indeed. A man, whose claims were certainly as good as anybody's, is M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus. Scion of one of the grandest families of the Republic and a coeval of Augustus and of Agrippa, he was recognized as third in importance behind Cassius and Brutus at Philippi, where he commanded the right wing of Brutus in the first engagement. After the defeat of the *liberatores*, he joined Mark Antony but fought later with Octavian's forces against Sex. Pompeius. Now a partisan of Octavian he was consul suffect with him in the year of Actium, where he was again

[16] A lengthy process, see J.W. Rich and J.H.S. Williams, "*Leges et Iura P.R. Restituit*: A New Aureus of Octavian and the Settlement of 28–27 B.C.," *NC* 159 (1999), 169–213.

[17] I do not see what the "general grounds" are on which Augustus "is likely to have written and published earlier" (Lewis, "Imperial Autobiography," 689) and would certainly not wish to date Agrippa's composition as late as 17 or even later (692).

one of the commanders. After various campaigns both before and after Actium he participated in Octavian's triumph in 29, and he himself won a triumph *ex Gallia* in 27. He renounced after a few days the revived office of *praefectus urbi* but was the first to occupy the new one of *curator aquarum*, and it was he who spoke for the Senate as he proposed the title of *pater patriae* for Augustus in 2 BC.

Messalla not only outshone the fellow nobles of his day as a general and statesman, but he also had a greater influence on the literary life of Rome than any of them[18]—in the first place as the patron of an important literary circle[19]—but also with contributions of his own. Tibullus, Sulpicia, and Lygdamus were members of his set, as were the, for us, anonymous poets of the *Panegyricus Messallae*, the *Ciris* dedicated to him and *Catalepton* 9. They all testify to the width of his circle, though admittedly not all of these to its quality. Like many others of his class, Messalla composed Greek bucolics[20] in all probability only as a distraction from more serious business. The most momentous intellectual pursuit of a Roman statesman was, of course, rhetoric. He applied himself to it with the behooving earnestness, as we learn from his translating Greek speeches including, among others, a *pro Phryne* of Hyperides (Quint. 10.5.2). His eloquence was highly praised in his youth by Cicero (Cic., *ad Brut*. 23 [1.15].1) and later, especially his careful precision in the Latin language by Seneca Rhetor (Sen., *contr*. 2.4.8). Tiberius, in the event himself a far from negligible practitioner of Latin rhetoric,[21] took in his youth Messalla as his model (Suet., *Tib*. 70.1), and in later generations he was much admired by the most eminent authorities.[22] Some scattered references are proof of his continuing interest in the correct use of Latin terminology and to his compositions on its various aspects, including a special work on the letter 's'.[23] Thus Messalla came to write a historical work with the best possible preparation as both an experienced and successful general and statesman and as an outstanding orator and practitioner of the Latin language.

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[18] "Of them"—that is, excluding of course the outsider Maecenas.

[19] On this circle, see, e.g., G.B. Conte, *Latin Literature. A History* (Baltimore, 1994), 260–261; P. White, "Poets in a New Milieu: Realigning," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus*, ed. K. Galinsky (Cambridge, 2005), 328–332.

[20] [Virg.] *Catal*. 9.13–16; cf. Plin., *Ep*. 53.5.

[21] See R. Syme, *Tacitus* (Oxford, 1958), 2:700–703.

[22] See Quint. 10.1.113, cf. 4.1.18; Tac., *Dial*. 18, cf. 20.

[23] Suet., *Gram*. 4, and see R.A. Kaster, C. *Suetonius Tranquillus*, *De grammaticis et rhetoribus. Edited with a Translation, Introduction, and Commentary* (Oxford, 1995), ad loc.; Quint. 1.7.35, 1.5.15, 1.7.23, 9.4.38.

It is to this work that we must now turn our attention. Despite the fact that we have no explicit testimony as to the language in which it was composed, and allowing for the above quoted evidence for Messalla composing works of literature in Greek, I think that leaving the question open[24] is exceeding due scholarly caution. There is no comparing the serious matter of the composition of memoirs that were to be set hopefully aside those of Augustus and Agrippa to the composing of Greek bucolics as a diversion or translating, as a rhetorical exercise, Attic orators. And surely no inference may be drawn from the fact that Messalla expressly refers to Cassius as talking in Greek (Plut., *Brut*. 40.2–3). Moreover, there may exist direct testimony for the case of Latin. If indeed the fragments quoted by Charisius (see below) belong to this work, any doubts are dispelled.[25] Though it seems to be certain that Messalla's was a work of memoirs, neither its title nor its exact nature can be known. As to its extent and time of composition we are also in the dark, except if we think it appropriate to relate to the extant fragments as if they were representative of the entire opus.

Since all the fragments, both the safe and the thornier ones, belong to the times before Actium it is an attractive suggestion to put the work at a period not much later, albeit that Messalla's long life lasted almost to the very end of the Augustan Principate. This, then, would again indicate the likelihood of a date close to the autobiographies of Augustus and of Agrippa. If this was actually the case, again inferences could be made connecting it with the compositions of the other two, though in this case one would be inclined to assume that Messalla followed in the footsteps of his betters. This, in its turn, cannot be separated from a wider view of the relationships of the three men. The fact that the poets of the Tibullan corpus, albeit in full concord with what we usually conceive of as the ideals of the Augustan Age, never mention the Princeps yet praise their patron Messalla, may be interpreted in different ways.[26] Inferring from this particular characteristic of the poetic circle in which Messalla was some sort of leader of an opposition appears to be patently absurd since it runs contrary to the known facts about his life and career. Less improbable seems to believe, that he, and his poetic supporters, went

[24] As does, e.g., Peter, *HRR*, 2:LXXVIIII.

[25] See F. Münzer, *Beiträge zur Quellenkritik der Naturgeschichte des Plinius* (Berlin, 1897), 405–406; Peter, *HRR*, loc. cit. does not accept this view but nevertheless prints the fragments with the memoirs.

[26] Cf. discussion in White, "Poets in a New Milieu: Realigning," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus*, 331.

to some length to maintain their independent position and to support his claim to be the third man in the state. Thus we may now turn to the fragments to see to what extent such claims may be backed up by them.

The most substantial of these are preserved in Plutarch's *Life of Brutus* and all pertain to the campaign of Philippi. In a meticulous analysis of the sources for the description of this section of the *Life*,[27] it is maintained that Messalla was used here as the main source with lesser contributions from other sources, such as Volumnius. Such, in fact, may have been his share, that relating the entire narrative to Messalla may well give us some idea of the overall flavor of his work, even though of course other sources, and above all the final contribution of the author, Plutarch, have to be considered.

As clearly emerges from Plutarch's references, Messalla's report of the campaign was comprehensive. If we may infer from it to the entire work, even with the proviso that such lengthy descriptions were reserved only for major events in which the author took an active part or which he witnessed, we may envision a work of sizeable proportions. Assuming that comparatively full descriptions were devoted to the campaigns of the thirties, including the war against Sex. Pompeius and the campaign of Actium (in which the contribution of Messalla was of the greatest importance), and again of the early twenties, including the Gallic campaign that earned him the distinction of a triumph—hardly to be left out even by the most unassuming author (a description surely not fit for Messalla)—this was a long work even if its terminal point was somewhere in the vicinity of that of Augustus, and presumably of Agrippa.

In the illustration case, as it were, of the campaign of Philippi we hear intimate details concerning Cassius and his views (Plut., *Brut*. 40.1–4) as well as of his use of Greek (40.2–3).[28] We learn that Messalla was equally close to Brutus from the fact (53.1) that it was he who introduced to Octavian Strato, the man who, according to one version, had helped Brutus to die. In view of the fact that this Strato was a friend of Brutus ever since they had studied rhetoric together (52.5) it is quite possible that also Messalla's acquaintance with Strato was connected with their rhetorical

[27] J.L. Moles, *A Commentary on Plutarch's Brutus* (DPhil Diss. Oxford, 1979), xl–xlviii.

[28] N.b. that in Plut., *Brut*. 52.1 we are told that Brutus spoke in Greek to Volumnius—surely the latter was the source for this detail: I take it that we owe these notices to Plutarch's particular interest in Romans using the Greek language, perhaps too commonplace to be discussed by S.C.R. Swain, "Hellenic Culture and the Roman Heroes of Plutarch," *JHS* 100 (1990), 126–145 (reprinted in B. Scardigli, ed., *Essays on Plutarch's* Lives [Oxford, 1995], 229–264).

interests. Yet beside his emphasis on his closeness to the two leaders and his insistence in calling Cassius his general (Tac., *Ann*. 4.34) it is also most reasonable to assume that he was the ultimate source of the statement that he was third only to the two leaders at Philippi (Vell. 2.71). In fact, the relatively many notices about Messalla from that campaign can safely be said to be chance morsels only from the feast of his autobiographical glorification: Messalla was with the most warlike legions on the right flank (Plut., *Brut*. 40.11), he captured three eagles from the enemy while they took none (42.5), and the number of enemy dead exceeded theirs (45.1), and finally we hear his opinion in the discussion about what should be done with the prisoners of war (45.7). It seems, especially noting that the narrative did not end with the campaign of Philippi, that Messalla stood at the center of the story, though on occasion the real protagonists of the action may have received significant supporting roles.

The single safe reference to the war against Sex. Pompeius shows yet again Messalla advertising his closeness to the man in power: Menas was the only freedman admitted to Augustus' dinner party, having gained his freedom by the betrayal of the fleet of Sex. Pompeius.[29] Another chance notice from the memoirs may reveal a tendency. Messalla called Dellius the turncoat of the civil wars for having deserted Dolabella for Cassius, Cassius for Antony, and Antony for Octavian (Sen., *Suas*. 1.7). Since a very similar charge could easily be leveled against Messalla himself, one suspects that this was indeed his polemical reply to a comparable accusation by Dellius. By not too great a leap of the imagination one may surely connect Messalla's rejection of such charges with his description of his truly intimate relationships with the leaders at the time.

Lastly, a number of fragments of Messalla cannot be safely placed and may be quotations from other works though it seems more probable that they formed parts of the *Memoirs*.[30] These are in the first place three linguistic notices found in Charisius: the word *gausapae* (*Armenii regis spolia gausapae*) is from *de Antonii statuis*[31]—as so often there is no telling whether this is the title of a work (if so, most likely a polemical oration),

[29] Suet., *Aug*. 74.1. M. Toher, "Augustus and the Evolution of Roman Historiography," in *Between Republic and Empire. Interpretations of Augustus and his Principate*, eds. K.A. Raaflaub and M. Toher (Berkeley, 1990), 143 n. 12 is overconfident in asserting that "[T]here is no reason to think his comments on the guests at Augustus' dinner parties … should be related to this work."

[30] For allocating them to the historical work, see Münzer, *Beiträge zur Quellenkritik der Naturgeschichte des Plinius*, 406.

[31] *GLK* 1:104 = *HRR* 2 fr. 7 = *ORF*^{2} fr. 18 p. 133.5.

or the description of the subject matter; the context is certainly that of Antony's Parthian campaign. We are in similar doubt with the reference to the use of *fretus* (*-us*, masc., *angustiae fretus*), ascribed to *contra Antonii litteras*:[32] here the context is in all probability the Straits of Sicily and the war against Sex. Pompeius. The third, the gen. pl. *vectigalium* (*de vectigalium Asiae constitutione*)[33] is again doubtful, but could refer to Antony's actions in the East. On balance, it seems more likely to assume that these quotations come from the well-attested autobiographical work than to assume a number of otherwise unknown compositions, from each of which Charisius happens to quote only once. At any rate, these chance references surely point toward Messalla's strongly held views on the Latin language and thus give some indication of the style of the autobiographical work. Lastly, a notice ascribed to "Messalla orator" is an attack on the luxury of Antony and Cleopatra[34]—again, possibly from a special work against the triumvir, but more likely from the extensive work of memoirs.

To repeat: since all the likely and possible fragments of this work relate to events from the campaign of Philippi and to those of the thirties, it seems an odds-on bet that it was composed more or less in tandem with, or perhaps better in the wake of, the autobiographical works of Augustus and of Agrippa. His *Memoirs* asserted Messalla's place in history and in the state, his closeness to the very few above him in status, and they had a polemical edge only too well known from Roman rhetoric. What one would still like dearly to know is whether Messalla was exceptional in following his leaders or whether it is only by the vagaries of transmission that we do not know more about a vogue in autobiographical writings among Roman aristocrats.

Is it mere chance that the only fragment of Agrippa's autobiographical work, except for those dealing with the achievements of his aedileship, relates to the campaign of Philippi, an event narrated extensively by Messalla? The two men were on opposing sides in this campaign and it is a tempting thought that these were rival versions, the one describing the side of Octavian and his closeness to the commander, the other proudly sticking to his loyalty to the defeated, and dead, Cassius and Brutus? And

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[32] *GLK* 1:129 = *HRR* 2 fr. 8 = *ORF* [2] fr. 16 p. 164.4.

[33] *GLK* 1:146 = *HRR* 2 fr. 9 = *ORF*[2] fr. 19 p. 186.9.

[34] Plin., *Nat. His.* 33.50 = *HRR* 2 fr. 10 = *ORF*[2] fr. 17: *Messalla orator prodidit Antonium triumvirum aureis usum vasis in omnibus obscenis desideriis, pudendo crimine etiam Cleopatrae.*

if so, did this narrative rivalry persist in the later events? We are not to know, but given Messalla's ambition and position in the state, these thoughts should not be dismissed as mere fantasy.

It is now time to turn to a different aspect of the impact of the personality of Augustus. Clearly, his *Memoirs* could not satisfy the thirst of the public for information about the Princeps. It appears that it was in the first place the intimate details, "What the Butler Saw," that were in demand to stimulate the public. Add to this the versions that were spread, both favorable and unfavorable, to Augustus, all subsumed under the name of propaganda, and an entire genre of writing presents itself to the enquirer. Consequently we are also allowed a rare insight into the habits of the Roman reading public, and that elusive, but surely existing, perhaps even weighty entity, the middlebrow reader. Such minutiae as the physical appearance of the Princeps would certainly not add to the facts that were familiar to those personally acquainted with him. Incidentally, such details also reveal a healthy dose of skepticism in the Roman public concerning official versions: despite the widest possible circulation of Augustus' portraits on the coinage and the almost incredibly widespread diffusion of his statues,[35] it seems that there existed a massive wish to know what he really looked like. Not surprisingly, it is Suetonius, the late descendant of these writers (but not only theirs) who saves for us some morsels of the appetizers they provided. As against the notion that Augustus was short of stature, the freedman Julius Marathus reported that he was five feet nine inches tall (Suet., *Aug.* 79.2). What the exact position of this freedman may have been is unclear: the text *Iulius Marathus libertus †etiam memoriam eius quinque pedum et dodrantis fuisse tradit* has been emended to *a memoria* by Lipsius, to *in memoria vitae* by Casaubon, and to *et in memoriam* by Bücheler.[36] At any rate, he must have been close enough to Augustus to refute those who doubted their eyes when contemplating, say, the well-proportioned, middle-sized body of one of the innumerable copies of the Augustus from Prima Porta. The other fragment from the same author tells about the portent of the birth of a Roman king before Augustus was born; whether or not he himself believed the story, Marathus was clever enough to add an explanation of why no notice was found of the event in the official

[35] M. Pfanner, "Über das Herstellen von Porträts. Ein Beitrag zu Rationalisierungsmaßnahmen und Produktionsmechanismen von Masseware im späten Hellenismus und in der römischen Kaiserzeit," *JDAIR* 104 (1989), 157.

[36] See Ihm's apparatus and criticism in Peter, *HRR*, 2 C.

records.[37] More importantly, we may guess from this fragment that the work treated the life of Augustus from before his birth, though there is no knowing whether Iulius Marathus wrote still in Augustus' lifetime or reported his life down to his death. Other details of the book, its length, or style elude us: we may only guess from the two references that it communicated a version friendly to the Princeps. It is only one possibility—unresolved owing to the crux in the above quoted text—that the work centered on the memoirs of the author and related about Augustus (and members of his family as well as other important persons?) only details he could vouch for from personal knowledge.

Even more intriguing is another notice in Suetonius concerning the baby Octavian, who disappeared at night from his cradle and was then found lying in a tower facing the rising sun.[38] It is of course the identity of the author of this story that is most exciting. It seems that the most obvious candidate for identification is Drusus the Younger, the son of Tiberius, who is known to have delivered a *laudatio funebris* for Augustus.[39] In that case, one would best assume that he composed a work covering the entire life of the Princeps, no doubt generously peppered with the personal reminiscences of a close family relative. A somewhat less probable candidate appears to be Drusus the Elder, the brother of Tiberius, who died in 9 BC and would thus have written still in the middle years of Augustus. One wonders whether the tight schedule of his campaigns allowed the leisure needed for such a work.[40] Finally, it would be almost absurd to credit the notice in Suetonius to an unknown Drusus, to a freedman or another person of little consequence without Suetonius giving any indication of such a state of affairs—the reference seems clearly designed for readers who would instantly identify the person in question. Thus we may presume with some confidence that wondrous stories justifying or explaining the superhuman elevation of the Princeps circulated in his household, and that their diffusion in writing was encouraged. One may also guess that the wider readership targeted must have been not

[37] Suet., Aug. 94.3: *Auctor est Iulius Marathus, ante paucos quam nasceretur menses prodigium Romae factum publice, quo denuntiabatur, regem p(opulo) R(omano) naturam parturire; senatum exterritum censuisse, ne quis gravidas uxores haberent, quod ad se quisque spem traheret, curasse ne senatus consultum ad aerarium deferretur.*

[38] Suet., Aug. 94.6: *infans adhuc, ut scriptum apud C. Drusum extat, repositus vespere in cunas a nutricula loco plano, postera luce non comparuit diuque quaesitus tandem in altissima turri repertus est iacens contra solis exortum.*

[39] Dio 56.34.4–35.1. He also read in the Senate documents after the death of Augustus: Suet., *Tib.* 23.1; Zon. 10.38.

[40] He is known to have delivered the funeral oration for Octavia; see Dio 54.33.5.

very different from the one envisaged by Iulius Marathus. Yet again, we are not in a position to decide whether the work had an autobiographical focus and treated Augustus *en passant*, or whether the Princeps was at the center of its attention.

Suetonius is, however, not our only source for such chance fragments pertaining to miraculous occurrences connected with Augustus or other favorable reports about him. One Baebius Macer testified, according to a commentator of Virgil, on the appearance of the comet at the games in honor of the Dictator Caesar.[41] Another notice from the same author, also preserved in a Virgilian commentator, pertains to a much later stage in the career of the Princeps, and reports that he presented the boys who took part in the *Troia* with helmets and spears.[42] Though the demarcation of the boundaries of fragments is notoriously difficult, it would seem only natural to include with the report of Baebius Macer the account about those who thought of Caesar's comet as illuminating the Young Caesar's glory. But even without this notice it is difficult to see why one should hesitate to count this writer with those sympathetic to Augustus.[43] Also in this case the exact nature of the work, a record of more autobiographical nature or memoirs centered on Augustus, eludes us.

However, not all such works of doubtful form, composed in the lifetime of Augustus or following his death, emanated from his household or were even sympathetic to the Princeps. Obviously, the early career of Augustus, and above all the proscriptions, laid him open to charges of cruelty and other vices. Thus one Iulius (or, according to some manuscripts, Iunius) Saturninus contrasted his attitude, only reluctantly putting an end to the proscriptions with the relative lenience of Lepidus.[44]

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[41] Serv. Auct. ad Verg., *Ecl.* 9.47: *Cum Augustus Caesar ludos funebres patri celebraret, die medio stella apparuit. ille eam esse confirmavit patris sui … Baebius Macer circa horam octavam stellam amplissimam, quasi lemniscis, radiis coronatam ortam dicit, quam quidam ad inlustrandam gloriam Caesaris iuvenis existimabant …*

[42] Serv. ad Verg., *Aen.* 5.556: *Baebius tamen Macer dicit a Caesare Augusto pueris, qui luserant Troiam, donatas esse galeas et bina hastilia.*

[43] As does Peter, *HRR*, 2 C: *… etsi res ab eo traditae ad Augustum pertinent, utram partem in scribendo secutus sit, fragmentis non significatur.*

[44] Suet., Aug. 27.2: *Iulius Saturninus hoc amplius tradit, cum peracta proscriptione M. Lepidus in senatu excusasset praeterita et spem clementiae in posterum fecisset, quoniam satis poenarum exactum esset, hunc a diverso professum, ita modum se proscribendi statuisse, ut omnia sibi reliquerit libera.* It seems that the next sentence, giving an example of Augustus honoring a man who hid his patron during the proscriptions, does not derive from the same source, though we cannot be absolutely sure. Since the contrast here between Lepidus' leniency and Augustus' cruelty is the exact opposite of what we learn most vividly from the so-called *laudatio Turiae* (II lines 11–21) one is strongly tempted

Unfortunately, nothing is known of the author. One will put his time with some confidence later than the death of Lepidus in 12 BC, and probably, though not certainly, after the death of Augustus himself—it is not quite clear whether it was more dangerous circulating such a work in the lifetime of Augustus or under Tiberius.

A highly suspicious episode in the early career of Octavian was the—for him—vastly advantageous decease of both consuls of 43 in the war of Mutina. Since the answer to the question *cui bono* was apparent, it was easy to construct versions with Octavian as the villain of the piece. One such highly damning report has been preserved for us by Suetonius and ascribed to one Aquilius Niger.[45] Since the cognomen is common enough, the equation with a friend of Antony's by that name should only be mentioned, not necessarily endorsed.[46] Again, we are ignorant not only of the identity of the author, but also of the nature of the work. Nevertheless, if the equation with the friend of Antony is right, we learn that he was also close to Octavia, and thus perhaps in a position to compose eyewitness memoirs of Augustus; more realistically, we just don't know.

On the one hand we cannot be sure how many of these writings were indeed memoirs with Augustus as their main concern, but on the other it also seems clear enough that we have here only chance examples from a genre that apparently was immensely popular. Surely the judgment of Tacitus, according to whom there were distinguished writers of the Augustan Age, (though eventually flattery got the upper hand)[47] is nicely illustrated by these samples. Perhaps Tacitus did not mention here the unfavorable reports; he gives us one example of these by repeating, in

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to assume a reaction of one of the works to the other, or at least an open controversy on the subject. The date of the *laudatio Turiae* is now almost generally accepted as a little before 9 BC: it seems that a reaction of an otherwise unknown polemicist to the grand inscription (or like versions circulating in manuscript or orally) is much more likely than the grief-ridden widower's using the opportunity of the *laudatio* of his wife to set the historical record straight.

[45] Suet., *Aug.* 11: *Hoc bello cum Hirtius in acie, Pansa Paulo post ex vulnere perissent, rumor increbruit ambos opera eius (viz. Octaviani) occisos, ut Antonio fugato, re p. consulibus orbata solus victores occuparet. Pansae quidem adeo suspecta mors fuit, ut Glyco medicus custoditus sit, quasi venenum vulneri indidisset. Adicit his Aquilius Niger alterum e consulibus Hirtium in pugnae tumultu ab ipso interemptum.*

[46] Plut., *Ant.* 53.4 mentions a Niger as a friend of Antony and an emissary to him from Octavia; Peter, *HRR*, 2 C *fortasse*, ignored by C.B.R. Pelling, *Plutarch. Life of Antony* (Cambridge, 1988), ad loc.

[47] Tac., *Ann.* 1.1: *temporibusque Augusti non defuere decora ingenia, donec gliscente adulatione deterrerentur.*

essence, without referring to sources, the charges of Aquilius Niger or of somebody else agreeing with him in the famous juxtaposition of the differing views about Augustus.[48]

It was just to be expected that such memoirs would be devoted also to (or have as one of their main concerns) the rival vanquished at Actium, not to mention the fact that Antony and Cleopatra were by far the most colorful characters of their age—indeed among the most colorful of any age, the archetypal celebrities, as it were. That tales about the highlife at the court of the "Club of Inimitable Livers",[49] based on eyewitness accounts, were circulating is vouched for by Plutarch, who heard them from his grandfather Lamprias, who in turn heard them from the doctor Philotas, who was studying at the time at Alexandria and become acquainted with people employed at court (Plut., *Ant*. 28.3–12). It may be surmised with some confidence that such sparkling reports were spread and included not only in such relatively sober biographical works as Plutarch's.

Another physician mentioned by Plutarch in the *Life of Antony* is one Olympus[50] who belonged to the entourage of Cleopatra and reported about the last days of the couple, though of course there is no knowing how far back he went in his narration and what else was included in it. Again, this single notice is a powerful reminder of the thirst of the public for salacious details and of the amount of such information on offer. Indeed it is only natural that the death of the queen, since the Renaissance a favorite theme with artists, was at the focus of the curiosity, prurient or matter of fact, of contemporaries. But whatever the true nature of all of these works, no doubt these half dozen or so chance quotations are but the proverbial tip of the iceberg of the wealth of memoirs concerning Augustus, Antony and Cleopatra, and conceivably other grandees.

So far Roman writers of autobiographical works or memoirs in the age of Augustus. However, the Augustan Age is also the first in which we can truly speak of a Greco-Roman civilization, including a Greco-Roman literature, an age in which the trends of writers in both languages showed more remarkable similarities than differences. As mentioned above, the prime example of Greek autobiographical writing of the

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[48] Tac., *Ann*. 1.10: *caesis Hirtio et Pansa, sive hostis illos, seu Pansam venenum vulneri adfusum, sui milites Hirtium et machinator doli Caesar abstulerat* …

[49] Plut., *Ant*. 28.2.

[50] Plut., *Ant*. 82.4 = *FGrHist*. 198; see on him also E. Groag, "Beiträge zur Geschichte des zweiten Triumvirats," *Klio* 14 (1915), 60–61 n. 2.

time is also our chief illustration of the connection between describing a living person's life and one's own. Best known for his *Life of the Young Caesar* (of which considerable portions are preserved in the *Constantinian Excerpts*), Nicolaus of Damascus seems to have induced at least one other person to autobiographical writing. The fact that this person was Herod, King of the Jews, adds, as shall be seen, an extra dimension of interest to the development of the genre in the period here under discussion.

Nicolaus,[51] a coeval of Augustus, Agrippa, and Messalla Corvinus came from a distinguished family of his city. His studies included Peripatetic philosophy and his connections in the East were the most high-ranking: he was tutor to the children of Mark Antony and Cleopatra, and at least for the last decade of his rule a close adviser, friend, and trusted diplomatic emissary of Herod the Great. Nicolaus was a prolific writer and, a rare phenomenon among the ancients—the other examples that come to mind are his fellow Peripatetic Demetrius of Phaleron and Posidonius—combined an interest in history and in philosophy. Two of his works left a lasting impact. His most extensive work was a universal history in one hundred forty-four books from the earliest times down probably to the death of Herod (4 BC). Some of the contents of the first seven books on the Ancient Near East and Early Greece are known chiefly from the *Constantinian Excerpts*, and again the books from 123 on, dealing with the times of Herod the Great, are the main source of Josephus *AJ* 14–17; a few other fragments pertain to various other sections of the work. Much of the Herodian part of his writing was based on firsthand acquaintance with the persons and events, in many of which he actively participated in the latter part of the reign; the part of Herod's *Memoirs* in that process will be discussed below. The other work from which a considerable amount of fragments have come down to us is, as mentioned above, his *Life of Caesar* (Augustus): it made extensive use of the subject's *Autobiography* and will be discussed below (ch. 8) in that connection. Yet even in the present context of discussing autobiography in the Augustan Age, Nicolaus' exploitation of the *Autobiography* of Augustus for his biography is a crucially important pointer to the closeness of Greek and Latin autobiographical writing in this period and of the dominant role of the Princeps also in this sphere. Nicolaus also wrote an Ἠθῶν συναγωγή of Peripatetic coloring, as well as dramatic and philosophical works, some of the latter preserved in Syriac and Arabic translations.

[51] For a concise overview, see E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.–A.D. 135)* 1 (Edinburgh, 1973), 28–32.

From the autobiographical work that is the subject of the present discussion, nine fairly substantial fragments are extant (*FGrHist* 90 F131–139). But first we shall have to look at the background of that work. B.Z. Wacholder's otherwise worthy monograph on Nicolaus[52] goes completely astray in discussing his *Autobiography* (40–51). His argument concerning the influences on him consists of two main points, the first of them running wholly in face of any available evidence, the second sharing this feature with a serious distortion of the essence of both biography and autobiography. Setting the question of the uniqueness of Nicolaus' *Autobiography* among Peripatetics and the dearth of Greek autobiographical tradition in general, Wacholder claims first an influence on him of the "wealth of autobiographical literature in the East" (40) and believes that "it may be presumed he was acquainted with the Hebrew and Aramaic works, presumably in their original tongues, and certainly in the current Greek translations ... Herod's court probably served as an entrepôt for Hebrew and Greek scholars." (40–41).

There is no need to go into a detailed examination of this thesis, and a brief refutation will have to do. First, though the level of influence of Hellenism on Judaism in this period is a subject of some importance entertaining a lively scholarly discussion ranging the entire scale from maximalists to minimalists (though no absolute deniers—it is enough to refer to the about three thousand Greek loanwords in Rabbinic literature) there is no shred of evidence for an influence in the opposite direction; it may be sufficient to mention the fact that in the entire pre-Christian Greek and Latin literature there is one single—and that one not even literal—quotation from the Hebrew Bible,[53] although it was available in Greek translation from about the second century BC. Except for such freak evidence as the story about Cleopatra reckoning the Hebrews among the peoples with whom she could converse in their own tongue (Plut., *Ant*. 27.4) we know nothing—and it would be counter to all we know about Greco-Roman civilization—of Greeks or Romans studying Hebrew. It hardly needs saying that though there is solid evidence for a Greek intellectual circle at the court of Herod (see below) nothing of the sort can be said about the connections of the king with Jewish proto-Rabbinic scholarship. (Wacholder is at pains to draw parallels between Nicolaus and Hillel, a contemporary and a major figure of proto-Rabbinic

[52] B.Z. Wacholder, *Nicolaus of Damascus* (Univ. of Calif. Publications in Hist.) 75 (Berkeley, 1962).

[53] [Longin.] *de subl*. 9.9 and *GLAJJ* 1:361–365.

learning.) Second, Wacholder completely confuses biographical and autobiographical motifs, abundant in a great number of literary genres, with biography and autobiography proper, or with literature dominated by the (auto)biographical motif.[54] It will suffice here to refer to the scholarly consensus as formulated in an authoritative work of reference: "Apart from the Book of Nehemiah, which may well be considered an autobiography, Josephus' apologetic *Vita*, and hagiographic works, autobiographies and biographies are totally unknown among Jews in ancient times ... The biographic genre was also unknown to medieval Hebrew literature and there is almost no writing in the field."[55] Classical scholars as well as Christian theologians seem to have become alert to the absence of rabbinic biography,[56] but in fact this absence—though this is not pertinent to the present discussion—is much wider. Let it only be said that this absence persisted in fact, with very few exceptions, until the Enlightenment, and has left considerable traces in certain circles to the present day.

It is then a different background against which Nicolaus' *Autobiography* has to be seen. And it is not far to seek. In fact, it consists of the confluence of two strains, Greek and Roman. Though lacking a tradition of Greek autobiography properly so called, Nicolaus of course had before him the rich harvest of Hellenistic intellectual biography, putting

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[54] It may be a consolation for him that he shares this fault with one of the great scholars of the century—yet one would do a disservice to scholarship in discussing the present subject while ignoring that the tremendous erudition and sharp wit of Momigliano did not save him from a grave failure. It is not a good sign for the scholarly community that the justified admiration for a scholar—fully shared by the present writer—led it to disregard the basic failure of one of his books (A. Momigliano, *The Development of Greek Biography* [Cambridge Mass., 1971]) on this issue, perhaps because despite this serious shortcoming it contains its fair share of brilliant insights and draws attention to otherwise unnoticed facts and details.

[55] *Enc. Judaica* 4, s.v. "Biographies and Autobiographies," ad init. Even this account seems to me much too liberal. At any rate, this is not the place and the present writer is not in a position to discuss the Book of Nehemiah, though any casual reader will notice that this is not an autobiography in any sense of the word, but the (autobiographical) report of the subject's affairs during a certain, limited, period of his life, totally lacking some of the most essential components (e.g., birth, childhood, family, and upbringing) of an autobiography as well as almost totally a personal touch; for Josephus, see the discussion later in this volume (ch. 9). A recent work on Jewish autobiography (M. Stanislawski, *Autobiographical Jews. Essays in Jewish Self-Fashioning* [Seattle, 2004]) discusses, next after Josephus, an early seventeenth-century autobiography. He examines the various reasons proposed for the lack of Jewish autobiographies (himself taking a rather skeptical view) at 10–14.

[56] R.A. Burridge, "Reading the Gospels as Biography," in *The Limits of Ancient Biography*, eds. B. McGing and J. Mossman (Swansea, 2006), 39–42.

the emphasis on character and its development as the key to the understanding of the subject's achievement. It hardly needs saying that a man who saw himself as a philosopher, and a philosopher who put his doctrine to the test of practical life, had before him any number of models to follow.

Moreover, the role of intellectual adviser to the rulers of the world was not new. And these rulers could be "barbarians," provided they were of the right sort—those who accepted and internalized Greek *paideia* to a degree that made them virtual Greeks. Nicolaus at the side of Herod would also recall to readers relationships such as that of Polybius and Scipio Aemilianus—though Polybius, of course, never wrote an autobiography, and the autobiographical details have to be extracted from his *History*.

In addition to Hellenistic autobiographies there were also Roman and contemporary influences on him. Nicolaus wrote his memoirs in old age in Rome,[57] where he settled after the death of Herod. Having used Augustus' *Autobiography* for the composition of the *Life of the Princeps* (see ch. 8 below), it is likely that he became acquainted with the similar works of his coevals Agrippa and Messalla Corvinus and perhaps also others, unknown to us. Thus the background, and in great likelihood the very idea of writing an autobiographical work, is plainly to be seen. Instead of presuming nonexistent evidence for improbable Jewish influences, the Roman impact is evident, and a telling sign for the increasing closeness in this period of the tendencies of Latin and Greek literature. Obviously, Nicolaus could not model his memoirs on those of Augustus; he would also not deem it appropriate to his station in society to imitate those underlings who supplied intimate details of their masters' lives and characters in order to satisfy the curiosity of the vulgar. His memoirs must have been much closer to those of Agrippa and Messalla Corvinus, confirming his part in the events and his closeness to Herod, but also to Augustus and Agrippa. In fact, the somewhat exaggerated role Nicolaus assigned to himself may well have been inspired by these models: even in the most charitable view he could hardly be reckoned as even the near equal of these great Roman statesmen and generals. If this was indeed so—and we must not lose sight of the fact that we have no express evidence for his acquaintance with these memoirs, though he appears to have devoted some effort to advertise his good relations with

[57] See *FGrHist* 90 F136.

Agrippa[58]—we may learn perhaps more about these lesser-known works from the composition of Nicolaus than vice versa.[59]

Despite these apparent influences we must not underestimate the innovation in his work. While *Lives* of philosophers, poets, and other intellectuals have been for a long time commonplace in Greek literature, the consequence of the fascination with the authors of admired works and the hope better to appreciate them or the wish to understand the doctrines and ideas by means of grasping the character and the lifestyle of their proponents, it seems that Nicolaus publicized his own life and individuality in order to gain a place among these admirable persons of the past. Nothing short of an exemplary life and character emerging from these memoirs could justify such a bold novelty. Though Nicolaus gave in his *History* great prominence to his own actions and influence at the court of Herod and at the center of power in Rome as can be learned from Josephus' *Antiquities*, it appears that he wished to advertise these actions and his own character to a wider audience than the one that could be expected to read his *maximum opus* of one hundred forty-four books.

The evidence for Nicolaus' *Autobiography* is extensive enough. There are the statements of the *Suda* and the few longish *Constantinian Excerpts*, but there is also the long tract of the history of Herod and his times reproduced (to whatever degree of faithfulness) in Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities*. Although these are derived from the appropriate parts of the *Universal History* there can be little doubt that those passages that exhibit the important role played by Nicolaus must also have had their counterparts, and most probably with added emphasis, in the later *Autobiography*.

The title of the work appears to have been *Concerning His Life and His Education*, a close parallel to the title of his biographical work on

[58] *FGrHist* 90 F134. We have no express evidence for Nicolaus' familiarity with Latin. However, even assuming that he could not read Latin and accepting at least a kernel of truth in his relationship with Agrippa, one finds it difficult to believe that he was unaware of the very existence of the *Autobiography*, and at least the general contents, of his friend (or "friend"). Though this is not the place to discuss the issue, it may be mentioned that the present writer takes a far less pessimistic view of the acquaintance with Latin in ancient Palestine than seems to be generally the case; see J. Geiger, "How Much Latin in Greek Palestine?" in *Aspects of Latin. Papers from the Seventh International Colloquium on Latin Linguistics, Jerusalem, April 1993*, ed. H. Rosén (Innsbruck, 1996), 39–57.

[59] It would be unwise to heap hypothesis upon hypothesis: but if Agrippa and Messalla Corvinus in their works associated themselves with certain actions of Augustus and dissociated themselves from others, Nicolaus certainly had reason to take a leaf from their book.

Augustus and a telling indication of the closeness of the biographies of living persons and autobiographies.[60] Clearly, Nicolaus the philosopher laid great stress on his intellectual development and accomplishments and was indeed inclined to adopt the pose of the sage (*FGrHist* 90 F137). For his assumed position as the philosopher-adviser to the ruler, he could look back on a long tradition, historical or fictitious, going back to Aristotle and Alexander, but with embryonic antecedents already in Herodotus. It appears that an additional reason to go to great lengths in describing his own virtues was the need to refute his detractors (*FGrHist* 90 F138)—in this he seems to have shared common ground with other authors of autobiographical works.

Nicolaus started his *Autobiography* (*FGrHist* 90 F131) with an account of his family: he praises not only his father, but also his mother (a point of some interest—how much do we know about Cicero's mother?) and refers to his brother, Ptolemy. His father's career and standing in his city gives him occasion to exhibit a healthy dose of local patriotism.[61] Next (*FGrHist* 90 F132), Nicolaus' education, which was truly encyclopedic. He excelled in all the liberal arts, having studied *grammatice*, and achieved a degree in *poetice* that enabled him to compose admirable tragedies and comedies. After that he turned to rhetoric, music, mathematics, and to the crowning discipline of philosophy; having studied it from all aspects he became an adherent of the Peripatetic school. Nicolaus assures us that none of these studies was used for gain; an entire life of study is akin to a traveler who adjusts his wanderings and stops to the circumstances before arriving at his true hearth and fatherland, philosophy.

The greatest part of the remains of the *Autobiography* deals with the time Nicolaus spent with (rather than "in the service of") Herod the Great, his contacts with and influence on the leaders of the world. He stresses the intellectual aspect of his relationship with Herod (*FGrHist* 90 F135)—this will be considered in more detail in the section on the memoirs of the king (see below). Another important feature is Nicolaus' expanding on Herod's philanthropy toward Greek cities (*FGrHist* 90 F134): no Greek would find reason to be critical of a fellow Hellene who

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[60] *Suda* s.v. = *FGrHist* 90 T1: Περὶ τοῦ ἰδίου βίου καὶ τῆς ἑαυτοῦ ἀγωγῆς, and see there for the work on Augustus. It is best to take this as the original title rather than the *Suda*'s description of the contents.

[61] For local patriotism in this part of the world, see J. Geiger, "Local Patriotism in the Greek Cities of Palestine," in *Greece and Rome in Eretz Israel*, eds. A. Kasher, U. Rappaport, and G. Fuks (Jerusalem, 1990), 141–150.

was in the service of such a philhellene Jew. Another section is devoted to Nicolaus' account of his (second) journey to Rome in 8 BC (*FGrHist* 90 F136), effecting the reconciliation between Herod and Augustus; later Syllaeus, the accuser of Herod, was condemned to death. Another important episode is the trial and condemnation of the king's sons (*FGrHist* 90 F136): readers of the *Autobiography* could learn (what they could indeed have learned earlier if they read the pertinent parts of the *Universal History*), that even in the bloody household affairs of Herod—Augustus was credited with saying that he would rather be Herod's pig than son (Macr., *Saturn*. 2.4.11)—there was a man who did all he could to save the innocent and cause the punishment of the evildoer. Finally (*FGrHist* 90 F136), Nicolaus paid a decisive role as the chief adviser to Herod's son, Archelaus, in the arrangements in Rome after the death of his father; though he was pleading the case of the prince against that of his brother Antipas and other members of the family as well as against the delegation of the Jews, he advised for the liberty of the Greek cities. Again, no reader of these memoirs could find fault with such a Greek even if he served a "barbarian" ruler.

But Nicolaus developed friendly relations not only with the influential "client-king," but also with the greatest man of the world and the companion closest to that man. When Agrippa was enraged against the people of Ilium and fined them because they neglected to receive appropriately his wife Iulia, the daughter of Augustus, on the occasion of her visit to the city, they turned to Nicolaus for help to bring Herod's influence to bear on his friend; Nicolaus, who traveled to meet Agrippa, succeeded in his task and gained, together with Herod, the gratefulness of the people of Ilium (*FGrHist* 90 F134). As for Augustus, besides the prominent role played by Nicolaus in the trial of Herod's sons and in the affair between Syllaeus and Herod, he may also have expanded the friendly private dealings between the Princeps and himself.[62] And of course the Romans, the descendants of the Trojans, always had a soft spot for Ilium; Roman readers would be invited to appreciate the happy relations between Nicolaus and that city.

Thus far the surviving fragments expressly assigned to Nicolaus' *Autobiography*. What else it may have contained is anybody's guess; however, at least one source should not be left untapped. Though there is no

[62] The *Autobiography* may well have been the ultimate source for the story of the excellent dates from Palestine named after Nicolaus by Augustus; see Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, 29.

knowing as to the exact relationship between the *Autobiography* and those sections of the *Universal History* that treated Nicolaus' own times and the events to which he was eyewitness or even those in which he was actively involved, it is a fair guess that the historical work did neither display fundamentally different attitudes from the *Autobiography* nor unexpected degrees of self-effacing of the author. Indeed two or three passages in Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities* contain items that in all probability had their corresponding versions in the *Autobiography*.

In one passage,[63] in which Josephus expressly refers to Books 123 and 124 of Nicolaus' *History*, we are told that Nicolaus acted as advocate for the Jews of Ionia before Agrippa in the matter of their civil rights: the plea for the status quo was accepted and the Jews were confirmed in their right to live according to their own customs. It would be absurd to assume that the role of the historian so well emphasized in the *History* gained less prominence in the *Autobiography*, though of course there is no knowing whether the story in the latter did not gain a somewhat different flavor. At any rate, this passage fits well with the fragment discussed above concerning Nicolaus' advocacy of Ilium before Agrippa. Even if the *Autobiography* was not thematically arranged, one will hardly wish to separate the two passages. It is not only the author's advertising his closeness to Agrippa that connects the two anecdotes, but something perhaps more fundamental. We encounter the author as advocating both the cause of Ilium, that city of ancient renown and special standing as ancestress of the Romans, and defending the ancestral rights of the Jews: thus not only a friend of the Jews, he was a man of principle, a man standing in for the right cause, and a man—something that certainly appealed to his prospective Roman readers—who respected antiquity and the good old ways.

In another passage,[64] when introducing Antipater Josephus says: "Nicolaus of Damascus, to be sure, says that his family belonged to the leading Jews who came to Judea from Babylon. But he says this in order to please Antipater's son Herod, who became king of the Jews by a certain turn of fortune." Obviously this is not a fragment of the *Autobiography*, nor a paraphrase of a passage, but no doubt it contains some basic elements that must have featured prominently in it. A Greek man of letters

[63] Jos., *AJ* 12.125–127 (*GLAJJ* no. 86).
[64] Jos., *AJ* 14.8–9 (*GLAJJ* no. 90), translation quoted by R. Marcus, *LCL*.

who so emphatically depicted his own intellectual accomplishments had to provide some explanations concerning his position as close friend and adviser to a "barbarian" king. As we shall presently see, Nicolaus gave great prominence to Herod's attainments in the liberal arts and to his own decisive influence on these interests of the king; in the age of Augustus, the appropriate cultural background would of course do away with a person's "barbarian" status, irrespective of his ethnicity. Yet even as a Jew Herod's descent was far from impressive, hence the undoubtedly false claim of his family being one of the leading families among the returning Babylonian exiles.[65] What appeared in the *History* as a defense of Herod must have been included in the *Autobiography* at least as a partial justification of its author.

In a similar vein another story reflects on what must have been Nicolaus' apologetic stance concerning his relations with Herod, which must have been heavily seasoned with remarks in defense of the king—and no doubt at the time of the writing of the *Autobiography*, with the king dead, his reputation could have only gone from bad to worse. After relating that Herod, having failed to rob them, built a memorial over the tombs of David and Solomon, Josephus adds:

> This structure is also mentioned by his contemporary, the historian Nicolaus, but he does not say that the king also went down [into the tomb], for he considered this action improper. Indeed Nicolaus continues to write in this manner about other things. For since he lived in Herod's realm and was one of his associates, he wrote to please him and to be of service to him, dwelling only on those things that redounded to his glory, and transforming his obviously unjust acts into the opposite or concealing them with the greatest care. For example, in his desire to give a color of respectability to the putting to death of Mariamme and her sons, which had been so cruelly ordered by the king, Nicolaus makes false charges of licentiousness against her and of treachery against the youths. And throughout his work he has been consistent in excessively praising the king for his just acts, and zealously apologizing for his unlawful ones.[66]

To be sure there is little to add here: Nicolaus' apologies for the king reflected of course on himself as friend and adviser to the king, and in the *Autobiography* these tendencies must have been repeated with even greater emphasis on the probity of Nicolaus and on his position. In sum, Nicolaus emerged—or hoped to emerge—from his *Autobiography* as a

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[65] On Herod's descent see, e.g., discussion in Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, 234 n. 3.

[66] Jos., *AJ* 16.183–185 (*GLAJJ* no. 93), translation quoted by R. Marcus, *LCL*.

philosopher and man of letters who also lived up to his high principles, and one whose efforts also brought about the spread and influence of Hellenic *paideia*.

Nicolaus was not only himself the author of an *Autobiography* but also without any doubt closely connected with the *Autobiography* of his patron, Herod.[67] Even though our direct acquaintance with that work consists of a single notice in Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities* (15.174) the interest it arises is manifold. We had above occasion to refer to the absence of the autobiographic genre from Jewish literature, ancient, medieval, and early modern.[68] His authorship of an *Autobiography* may raise the question of this work's place in Hellenistic-Jewish literature. This extensive literature is characterized by its Greek language and Hellenic forms and genres on the one hand, and its Jewish content on the other. Nevertheless, it would be inconceivable to argue that form did not influence contents: one has only to cast a fleeting glance at the chief extant representative of that literature, Philo of Alexandria. Yet it seems to me that Herod introduced into Hellenistic-Jewish literature a genre that was essentially uncongenial to it: in so doing he stretched the definition of Hellenistic-Jewish literature well beyond its limits—perhaps not surprising for a person who was always looked upon with a certain amount of suspicion by his fellow Jews.

Yet at any rate Herod was king of the Jews,[69] and, both according to his self-presentation and by the way foreigners saw him, a Jew, though

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[67] Despite the time elapsed and the many new archaeological discoveries, and although a number of books and collections of articles have been devoted to him since, not to mention the author's not unproblematic attitude to his subject, A. Schalit, *König Herodes. Der Mann und sein Werk* (Berlin, 1969), has not been superseded yet. A new comprehensive biography accounting for both new material and somewhat different *Fragestellungen* and approaches is a major *desideratum*. In the meantime a number of works filling some of the void may be mentioned, among them L.-M. Günther, *Herodes der Große* (Darmstadt, 2005); G. Prause, *Herodes der Große: Die Korrektur einer Legende* (Stuttgart, 1990). Some conference volumes devoted to Herod contain much useful material: L.-M. Günther, ed., *Herodes und Rom* (Stuttgart, 2007); N. Kokkinos, ed., *The World of the Herods. Volume 1 of the International Conference 'The World of the Herods and Nabataeans' held at the British Museum, 17–19 April 2001*, (Oriens et Occidens) 14 (Stuttgart, 2007); D.M. Jacobson and N. Kokkinos, eds., *Herod and Augustus: Papers Presented at the IJS Conference, 21st–23rd June 2005* (London, 2009).

[68] Perhaps it is not inappropriate to insert here a warning against misinterpreting the last verse (16:24) of 1 Macc. as referring to a biographical treatment of John Hyrcanus I—all we have there is the mimicking of a biblical phrase.

[69] Thus expressly designated both on amphora inscriptions (H.M. Cotton and J. Geiger, *Masada II. The Latin and Greek Documents* [Jerusalem, 1989], nos. 804–816) and in the major historical source about him (Jos., *AJ* 15.373, *BJ* 1.282).

his was a Hellenistic court with strong Roman influences.[70] Perhaps also taking account of his somewhat ambiguous standing he was, as a rule, careful not to offend Jewish religious sensibilities, even though many of the Greek cultural influences he may have shared with a certain proportion of his Jewish subjects or were beyond the scope of religious censure. A number of facts and cultural features will explain the background to his Greek[71] *Autobiography*.

It is Nicolaus who vouches for the intellectual interests of the king (*FGrHist* 90 F135). He tells us that after Herod suspended his study of philosophy he turned to rhetoric and asked Nicolaus to declaim with him. Next the king turned to history, according to Nicolaus a subject most commendable and useful for rulers, and it was Herod, according to this report, who encouraged Nicolaus to apply himself to the writing of history.[72] Taking the report of Nicolaus literally one cannot but remember that all this pertains to the last ten years or so of Herod's life, that is, from about his sixtieth year on. Of course nothing is said about his earlier times, and we are free to imagine, if we so wish, that the king was not fettered in his intellectual ambitions even before the arrival of Nicolaus at court. Unfortunately, we are not informed about Herod's education and his earlier encounters with Hellenic *paideia*. Nicolaus' report, of course, presupposes at least a conventional Greek education, and thus we are more or less left to imagine things according to our disposition. Certainly Herod's easygoing relations with Roman magistrates and rulers from early on in his career presume a fluency in Greek and a common educational background. At any rate, the considerable amount of hostile traditions pertaining to him fail to criticize him on this count. Another fact that may perhaps be a pointer is Herod sending three of his sons to be educated in Rome (Jos. *AJ* 15.342–343), but of course there is no dearth of examples of poorly educated people caring for the education of their offspring.

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[70] On some of these latter, see J. Geiger, "Herodes Philorhomaios," *Ancient Society* 28 (1997), 75–88.

[71] Though that single fragment does not state it expressly, it goes without saying that the language of a passage referred to by Josephus through the agency of Nicolaus could not be but Greek; but in fact the intellectual pastimes of Herod discussed in the text positively vouch for the language.

[72] On the other hand, the suggestion (Wacholder, *Nicolaus of Damascus*, 25–26) that it may have been Herod who induced Nicolaus to compose the biography of Augustus is highly speculative.

Even if taking all this into account one is tempted to take Nicolaus' assertions concerning Herod's intellectual pursuits with more than a grain of salt.[73] Yet we do possess fairly extensive evidence for a circle of Greek intellectuals at the court of the king.[74] Interesting archaeological support for these concerns is provided by what seem to be the remains of a library of his in his palace on Masada.[75] Herod's famous patronage of architecture—one may mention not only his new city of Caesarea, but also the rebuilding of the Temple of Jerusalem in magnificent Hellenistic style and his copious contributions to buildings in a number of Greek cities[76]—attests to acquaintance with major trends in the material civilization far beyond his native Judea; in fact, there is ample archaeological evidence for his employing the latest Roman fashions in building and ornamentation. One should also consider the more general, nay, universal, ambience of Herod among the client-kings of the Roman global village. He could not be unaware of the activities in the intellectual sphere of his contemporary Juba II of Mauretania, especially considering Herod's close connections with Egypt and Mark Antony and the fact that Juba was married to the daughter of Antony and Cleopatra. A (re)founder of another Caesarea (Iol), Juba was the author in both Greek and Latin of a great number of books, among them a considerable number of historical works, according to Nicolaus a prime interest, as we have seen, of Herod.[77] Though hardly anybody would claim that Herod's learning and writing were in any way comparable to those of the truly learned Juba, surely the king of Judea, a noted benefactor of many Greek cities and of such Hellenic events as the Olympic games, would not wish to be considered the ruler of a cultural backwater. Much closer to home was Archelaus II, king of Cilicia: a daughter of his was married to Alexander, one of the sons of Herod. (In fact this daughter, Glaphyra, later married Juba, a sort of marriage connection as conceived by royals). Archelaus wrote a chorography of the territories covered by Alexander the Great

[73] The inverse order of philosophy and rhetoric may indicate that there is at least a grain of truth in the story and that it is not a stereotyped description.

[74] D.W. Roller, *The Building Program of Herod the Great* (Berkeley, 1998), 54–65 provides a discussion and list; even after vigorous winnowing of this list some grains remain.

[75] Y. Hirschfeld, "The Library of King Herod in the Northern Palace of Masada," *SCI* 23 (2004), 69–80. Of course, not all owners of libraries are necessarily readers—let alone authors—of books.

[76] See Roller, *The Building Program of Herod the Great*.

[77] The comparatively extensive fragments of his works are collected in *FGrHist* 275.

as well as other works[78]—at the very least Herod must have been aware of their existence. Of course, these contemporaries were only continuing a well-established Hellenistic tradition of rulers with intellectual interests. Herod, like all Jews who spoke Greek, must have been acquainted at least to some degree with the Septuagint, or at least with its existence, and aware of the tradition that linked the conception of the translation of the Pentateuch with Ptolemy II, the Library and the Mousaion of Alexandria. Even more so he knew all he needed to know about his contemporaries, and certainly very much so about those with whom he came to bind family ties. It is less certain whether he was acquainted with the autobiographical writings of a number of Hellenistic rulers from Demetrius of Phaleron to Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II Physcon (see above, ch. 2 and 3) or at least aware of the existence of some of these writings. Nevertheless, one would dare to guess that even if he never heard of these works earlier, his mentor Nicolaus would not left him unacquainted with such an activity fitting for a king.

We have seen that Herod's identity and self-presentation as a Hellenistic ruler who surely regarded himself the equal of any of his fellow "client-kings" may have been an inducement to intellectual pursuits, and more precisely to the study of history and even to the particular choice of the writing in the autobiographical genre. Yet influence to that effect may well have come also from a completely different direction. Herod's close ties with Augustus and Agrippa, vouched for by Nicolaus, as well as his intimacy with the latter, all may have provided inspiration for the king's *Autobiography*.[79] Given what we know of his career, and not in the last place his dealing with his family, urgent need may have been felt to offer the world—perhaps indeed Augustus, and Agrippa if he was still alive at the time of composition[80]—Herod's own version of the events, but also no doubt there was room to advertise

[78] *FGrHist* 123, and see the commentary.

[79] It is more than doubtful whether the king could have read them since we have no indications whatsoever of his acquaintance with Latin. But awareness, and probably secondhand reporting (and Herod had sons who were educated in Rome) will have been sufficient.

[80] Dating the composition to the time of Nicolaus at court—that is, from the year 14 on—we are left with a couple of years before the death of Agrippa in 12. Yet perhaps the best opportunity to publish an apologetic account of his dealings with members of his family was the trial of his sons Alexander and Aristobulus, first in Rome and later in Berytus. Remembering the saying attributed to Augustus that he would prefer to be Herod's swine than his son, he certainly had a lot to apologize for.

his gratefulness and lasting loyalty to the rulers of the world. At any rate, the only surviving fragment relates Herod's version of the conspiracy of the former High Priest John Hyrcanus II, instigated by his daughter and Herod's mother-in-law, Alexandra (Jos., *AJ* 15.165–173); the version was given no credit, and an alternative one, damning to Herod, was universally believed (174–178). Obviously Josephus derived this piece of information secondhand from Nicolaus, his main source in this section of his work. Since the *Autobiography* left no other trace it remains questionable whether it was ever near to achieving its goal, nay, one may ask whether it was "published" at all—even in the restricted sense of this term in an age of manuscripts—or existed only in a handful of copies in the hands of Nicolaus and perhaps a few other trusted associates. Nevertheless, especially given the circumstantial evidence assembled above, there seems to be no reason for doubting the very composition by Herod.[81]

The main interest in Herod's *Autobiography* is then twofold: on the one hand, it is an additional piece of welcome evidence for the Hellenization as well as for the Roman influences at the court of Herod, and perhaps also in wider circles in Judea, and, what our main concern is here, on the other hand it attests to the imitation of the autobiographical writing of Augustus, and perhaps of Agrippa and other Roman grandees, by a contemporary client-king. For all we know it may be the sole surviving example of a greater original number of such works. It is a fit closure to a discussion on Augustan autobiography.

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[81] It would be unjustifiable and hypercritical to assume that the very existence of this work was an invention of Nicolaus and that he credited it with what was—or could have been—Herod's oral version of the events. I also do not wish to mention here the prospect that Nicolaus had ghostwritten the work: it is not the task of the historian to explore all theoretical possibilities, even when lacking positive indications.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

AUGUSTUS: THE EMPEROR WRITES HIS OWN ACCOUNT

Ronald Thomas Ridley

Autobiography, in the case of the emperor Augustus, presents a dilemma. He was the author of such a work, but it covered only the first half of his life, and only a few miserable fragments have survived (they will be discussed below). On the other hand, we have completely preserved a summary of his deeds written at the end of his life. It was not meant to be exactly an autobiography, but the only rational choice is to accept it as such, and a unique document it is.

The *Res Gestae divi Augusti* (Deeds of the Deified Augustus) is the lengthy inscription (twenty-five hundred words) in Latin left by the first Roman emperor to be set up outside his mausoleum, the brick core of which can still be seen in the Campus Martius in Rome. Its marble cladding and the inscription on two bronze tablets flanking the doorway have long since disappeared. Very shortly after his death in 14, a Greek translation was made and copies were set up in the provinces, although the inscription's contents are of primary concern to a Roman audience. These copies have been found only in the Greek East, most famously in both Latin and Greek at Ancyra (mod. Ankara) in the province of Galatia on the temple of Rome and Augustus, where it was known to Europeans from 1555 but took three centuries to clear from modern obstructions,[1] and the Latin text is very badly damaged; its location gave it the early name of the Monumentum Ancyranum. Another Greek copy was found at Apollonia in Pisidia (attached to Galatia) in 1828, and a second Latin copy began to appear at Antioch and a third in Pisidia in 1914, apparently the base of a collection of imperial statues. These Eastern copies seem to be the work of an overzealous provincial governor.

[1] The account of these labors may be found in R.T. Ridley, *The Emperor's Retrospect: Augustus'* Res Gestae *in Epigraphy, Historiography and Commentary* (Leuven, 2003), ch. 1.

The *Res Gestae* (RG), as it is usually known, has been the subject of at least fifty editions since the sixteenth century.[2] The establishment of the text has been the work of scholars on an international scale over more than four centuries. The earliest matter for discussion was the genre of the inscription. The undeniable fact is that it was set up outside the emperor's mausoleum, so it would most naturally be classed as a funerary inscription. This was contested primarily because of its unparalleled length, and because the deceased had written it himself (which, it will be seen, is not a disqualifier). Theodor Mommsen famously defined it as the emperor's "rendering of accounts"[3] to the Roman people, but it contains far more than that. Augustus was not required in any sense to render any accounts, and as Wilcken showed in 1931, all monies mentioned are his own.[4]

Parallel Texts

To understand the RG it is obviously necessary to put it into context. There is a wealth of Roman parallels. The first are tomb inscriptions, and the most famous are the Scipionic epitaphs from the family tomb at the beginning of the via Appia (*CIL* 1^2.6–16 = *ILS* 1–10 = *ILLRP* 309–317, *Remains of Old Latin*, trans. E. Warmington, 4.1–10). The best known is probably that of Scipio Barbatus:

> Cornelius Lucius Scipio Barbatus,
> begotten of his father Gnaeus, a man brave and wise,
> whose physique was very well matched with his bravery,
> who was consul, censor, and aedile among you;
> he captured Taurasia and Cisaunia in Samnium,
> subdued all of Lucania and carried off hostages. (cos. 298)

This epitaph follows the usual third person form (written presumably by a family member, probably his son) and stresses offices (*honores*) and achievements (*res gestae*), but also adds something that Augustus eschews: personal appearance (although his motive was hardly modesty, given the empire-wide saturation with his never-aging portraits). Other Scipionic texts reveal further parallels: the anxiety to excel. L. Scipio, Barbatus' son (cos. 259) was declared "best of all good men at Rome" (*oino … duorono optumo viro*). There is anxiety to surpass the deeds of

[2] They are listed in Ridley, *The Emperor's Retrospect*, xiii–xiv.
[3] Mommsen, "Der Rechnungsbericht des Augustus," *HZ* 57 (1887), 385–397.
[4] U. Wilcken, "Zu den Impensae der Res Gestae," *SB Preuss. Akad.* (1931), 772–785.

one's ancestors, as with P. Scipio (son of Africanus?). Enhancement of one's family was important; Scipio Hispanus (pr. 139) declares:

> I heaped virtues on my ancestors by my own character (*mores*) … I sought to equal the deeds of my father. I obtained the praise of my ancestors: they are glad that I was born to them. My honors have ennobled my stock.

Augustus' relations with his family in the RG are a fascinating subject (see below); common to him and Hispanus is the first person.

There are also Augustan epitaphs. L. Munatius Plancus (cos. 40, censor 22) was buried at Gaeta (*CIL* 10.6087 = *ILS* 886). In a few lines his family told that he was:

> consul, censor, imperator twice, VII vir epulonum, he triumphed over the Rhaetians, built the temple of Saturn from booty, assigned lands in Italy at Beneventum, and founded the colonies of Lugdunum and Raurica in Gaul.

All the things thought worthy of mention here can be paralleled in the RG: offices civil, religious and military, victories won, temples built, lands assigned, colonies founded. Another contemporary of Augustus is Q. Aemilius Secundus, a much lesser figure, a prefect of cohorts who served under the famous governor Sulpicius Quirinius in Syria:

> I by order of Quirinius held the census of the city of Apamaea: 117,000 citizens. I was also sent by Quirinius against the Ituraeans of Mt. Lebanon and took one of their forts.
>
> (*CIL* 3.6687 = *ILS* 2683, his epitaph from Venice)

Despite his modest status, Secundus, like Augustus, uses the first person.

Another category of texts, closely linked to epitaphs, is funerary eulogies (*laudationes*), an integral part of aristocratic display. The speech was delivered over the deceased, usually by a relative. Augustus himself delivered a eulogy for his closest colleague, M. Vipsanius Agrippa, in 12 BC. A fragment was recently discovered.[5] It contains the very Augustan sentence: "You rose to the summit by my favor, by your own virtues, and by the consensus of all men."

The delivery of eulogies went back to at least the third century. One of the earliest preserved is for L. Caecilius Metellus (cos. 251, 247, pontifex maximus 243–221), delivered by his son (Plin., *Nat. His.* 7.139–140). From the written record we can reconstruct the speech:

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[5] L. Koenen, "Die laudatio funebris des Augustus für Agrippa," *ZPE* 5 (1970), 217–283.; translated in *Roman Civilisation*, eds. N. Lewis and M. Reinhold, 3rd ed. (New York, 1990), 1.633.

> You achieved the ten greatest and highest aims in the pursuit of which wise men pass their lives: You wanted to be a first-class warrior, a supreme orator, a very brave general, to manage the most important tasks under your own auspices, to attain the highest office, to be supremely wise, to be considered the head of the senate, to obtain great wealth by good means, to leave many children, and to be very famous in the state.

The son claimed that no one else had attained these objectives. It is significant that Pliny pointed out that the claims were mendacious. Augustus undoubtedly knew this text, and would have agreed with the aspirations, but his score on this scale would have been about four out of ten.

There was also another very special form of this genre in Augustan Rome, the product of Augustus' own initiative. This was in the apses of the Augustan Forum, which contained statues and accompanying texts celebrating, on the one side, Aeneas and the Julian family and, on the other, the rest of the Roman aristocracy: what a presumptuous juxtaposition! The Roman originals are all in fragments, one of the endless victims of the Renaissance destruction of the classical monuments to provide building materials; half a dozen copies survive from Arretium (Arezzo). Two examples will suffice. Fabius Maximus (d. 203) is an accepted hero:

> Quintus Fabius Maximus, son of Quintus, dictator twice, consul five times, censor, interrex twice, curule aedile, quaestor twice, tribune of the soldiers twice, pontifex, augur. In his first consulship he conquered the Ligures and celebrated a triumph over them. In his third and fourth he tamed Hannibal, rendered fierce through many victories, by dogging his heels. When dictator he came to the aid of Minucius, his master of horse, whose power the people had made equal to his own, and of his routed army, and on that account was named father by the Minucian army. As consul for the fifth time he captured Tarentum and triumphed. He was considered the general of his time who was the most cautious and militarily the most experienced. He was chosen leader in the senate in two quinquennia.
>
> (*Inscr. Ital.* 13.3, no. 80)

His offices are given in descending order. Much space is devoted to the seemingly minor incident of his saving the *magister equitum*—but the epithet earned, *pater*, could not be more precious. Fabius' military reputation is summed up. The last word is significantly his rank as *princeps senatus*. A much more contentious case is C. Marius (158–186), a figure of loathing to the Optimates, but uncle of Augustus' great uncle:

> Gaius Marius, son of Gaius, consul seven times, praetor, tribune of the plebs, quaestor, augur, tribune of the soldiers. As consul he fought the war with Jugurtha, king of Numidia, outside the allotment [i.e., he was

> given the command not by the senate but by the people]. He captured him and, triumphing in his second consulship, ordered him to be led before his chariot. He was made consul for the third time in his absence. As consul for the fourth time he destroyed the army of the Teutoni [*sic*]. As consul for the fifth time he routed the Cimbri, and celebrated his second triumph, over them and the Teutoni. As consul for the sixth time he freed the republic when it was troubled by the revolt of the tribunes of the plebs and the praetors, who had seized the Capitol under arms. After his seventieth year, he was expelled from his country by civil war, restored by force of arms, and made consul for the seventh time. From the Cimbric and Teutonic spoils he built as victor a temple to Honos and Virtus. He entered the senate in triumphal dress, wearing patrician sandals. (*Inscr. Ital.* 13.3, no. 83)

Again the offices are in descending order. Care is taken to note special conditions pertaining to consulships. His relations with his associates in 100 are transformed. The seventh consulship cannot be entirely whitewashed. Building activities are not omitted. Again, so many items reappear in the RG.

Famous and successful Romans did not have to wait until death for commemoration and celebration. The genre of *res gestae* was well known. One of the best known is one of the earliest, that of C. Duillius (cos. 260), in which year he won a famous naval battle against the Carthaginians at Mylai in Sicily in the First Punic War:

> As consul the Segestaeans, allies of the Roman people, he delivered from blockade, and all the Carthaginian legions and their most mighty chiefs in broad daylight after nine days fled from their camp. Macela their town he took by storm. And in the same office he was successful in ships at sea as consul, the first Roman; crews and fleets of fighting ships the first he was to equip and train, and with these ships and fleets the Punic fleets and all the most mighty troops of the Carthaginians in the presence of Hannibal, their commander-in-chief (dictator), he defeated in battle on the high seas. And by main force he captured ships with their crews: septiremes, 1; quinqueremes and triremes, 30; he sank 13. Gold taken: 3,700 pieces. Silver taken from booty: 100,000 pieces … In his triumph naval booty he gave to the people and many freeborn Carthaginians he led before his chariot … (*CIL* 1^2 25 = *ILS* 65 = *ILRRP* 319 = *Inscr. Ital.* 13.3.69)

One is struck by the many parallels with the RG nearly three centuries later: the same density of text, the same anxiety to impress the reader (the enemy was led by a most mighty chief, they fled in broad daylight, their camp was captured by storm, etcetera), the same accounting mentality (ships, money, even time), but most importantly, the same stress on the extraordinary actions of the leader (all the things which Duillius was the first to do).

Three cases can be cited from the second century BC. One is the inscription of Aemilius Regillus commemorating his victory as praetor in 190 over Antiochos at Myonessos. It was set up on the temple of the Naval Lares which he had vowed:

> For finishing a great war, for subduing kings, this battle, fought for the purpose of winning peace, (gave victory) to Lucius Aemilius, the son of Marcus Aemilius, as he sailed out. Under his auspices and command, with his good fortune and generalship, in the area bounded by Ephesos, Samos and Chios, under the eyes of Antiochos himself, of all his army, his cavalry and his elephants, the fleet of King Antiochos, hitherto undefeated, was routed, shattered and put to flight, and there on that day forty-two ships were taken with all their crews. As a result of the completion of this battle King Antiochos was defeated and his naval empire overthrown …
>
> (Liv. 40.52–56)

The messages are clear: the enemy was royal and previously undefeated; the battle was fought under the eyes of all—even the elephants were watching (!); the victory was complete (note the three verbs) and decisive; the captives are tallied. The other example is Tiberius Gracchus the Elder's record of his exploits as consul and proconsul 177–175 in Sardinia, again inscribed on a temple, that of Mater Matuta in the Forum Boarium:

> Under the command and auspices of consul Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus the legion and army of the Roman people conquered Sardinia. In this province more than eighty thousand of the enemy were slain or captured. The state having been most successfully administered and the allies set free, the revenues restored, he brought back home the army safe and secure and very enriched with booty; for the second time he entered the city of Rome in triumph. In commemoration of this event he set up this tablet to Jupiter.
>
> (Liv. 41.28.8–9)

No claims to primacy or extraordinary deeds here, but rather hammering ablative absolutes listing successes. And the text, Livy tells us, was accompanied by a map of the island and paintings of the battles. Augustus' friend Agrippa had a famous map of the Roman world drawn up, but it was not part of the RG. Augustus should have known of these two public inscriptions. The third case is the only one commonly quoted, the acephalous inscription from Forum Popilii in Lucania, ascribed usually to P. Popillius Laenas (cos. 132), which basically records the building of the road from Rhegium to Capua, complete with milestones and bridges, a total of three hundred twenty-one miles:

> I made the road from Rhegium to Capua, and on that road I built all the bridges and set up all the milestones. And as praetor in Sicily I defeated

> the fugitive Italians, and returned 917 men (to their owners). And I was the first to ensure that on public land herdsmen gave way to farmers. I built a forum and public buildings here.
>
> (*CIL* 1^2.638 = *ILS* 23 = *ILRRP* 454)

The connections to the RG are again obvious: the accounting mentality, the stress on primacy, the credit for public works and for reforms, and the first person.

The most suggestive of all Republican *res gestae* were probably the accounts of the dominant military figure of the late Republic—and there was one to whom Augustus owed much: Pompey. One inscription was set up on the temple of Minerva, perhaps near the Pantheon in the Campus:

> Cn. Pompeius Magnus, Imperator, having completed a thirty years' war [!], having routed, scattered, killed, or received in surrender 12,183,000 people, having sunk or captured 846 ships, having accepted the surrender of 1,538 towns and forts, and having captured the lands from the Maeoti to the Red Sea, duly fulfils his vow to Minerva. (Plin., *Nat. His*. 7.95–99)

Again the accumulated verbs, the hammering ablative absolutes, the obsession with numbers, the vast geographic sweep, and the piety. And the account of his triumph in 61 shows the fascination with endless lists of geographic exotica:

> When he had freed the seacoast from pirates and restored rule over the sea to the Roman people, he triumphed over Asia, Pontus, Paphlagonia, Cappadocia, Cilicia, Syria, Scythians, Jews, Albanians, Iberia, the island of Crete, the Bastarnae, and, in addition, king Mithradates and Tigranes.

Not to be forgotten, however, are the supreme self-advertisements of any Republican generalissimo, Caesar's *Gallic War* and *Civil War*, multivolume celebrations of his war-mongering to extend the Roman frontiers (although not as far as he had dreamed), train an invincible army, and gather untold riches while wiping out whole populations, and then his justification for waging internecine war on his rivals. With mock humility, he employed the third person. Augustus celebrated his foreign wars at length, but passed hastily and selectively over his parallel rise to sole power through civil war. Like Caesar, however, Augustus wrote his own script.

Another favorite genre with Romans that allowed that was autobiography. Not one has survived. Authors include Aemilius Scaurus (cos. 115), Rutilius Rufus (cos. 105), and most famously, Sulla.[6] Considerable

[6] See esp. I. Calabi, "I commentarii di Silla," *Mem. Acad. Lincei* 8.3 (1950), 247–302.

fragments of this last work, preserved especially in Plutarch's biography, show the lengths to which such a leading politician could go in shameless self-advertisement and apologia, to the point of creating his own cult for his political partisans. The irony is that Augustus also wrote an autobiography, and a very particular text it was. The *De vita sua* comprised thirteen books, but went no further than the Cantabrian wars (Suet., *Aug*. 85.1); it was dedicated to Agrippa and Maecenas (fr. 8). Since it already reached the death of Caesar by Book 2 (fr. 7), it seems that Book 1 was devoted to his life to the assassination of his great-uncle, and the other twelve books dealt with the next eighteen years down to 26 BC. We are left with a pitiful twenty-three fragments and the usual problems in defining their limits, dependent on citations of Augustus' name by classical authors, who did not follow our conventions of documentation. It is widely agreed, for instance, that Appian's *Illyrike*, which devotes some half of its thirty chapters to Octavian's campaigns, must derive from what Appian calls Augustus' *hypomnemata*. By rights then, chapters 16–28 of that work should appear among the fragments—but only the chapters which give his name do (fr. 15). Augustus' mentality is unmistakably revealed throughout: his efforts, his speed, his charisma, his clemency, his bravery, and the list of evocative names of far-flung peoples, and the claims to the conquest of new territories and the recovery of standards lost by others. On the other hand, modern editors include three chapters of Appian's *Civil Wars* (5.42–44), allowing Lucius Antonius to indulge in a long speech of apology (13): improbable.

The fragments have few surprises: for instance, Augustus' admission that his father was the first senator in the family (fr. 3). Mostly, however, it is what we might expect: the shameless use of Cicero to foretell his greatness (4); emphasis on Caesar's will and generosity and divine status (5–7); justification of his reconciliation with Antony after the Senate's betrayal; stress on his age—only nineteen (10); apologia for episodes like the treatment of the praetor, Gallius (11); explanations of his disappearance at Philippi and the loss of the camp (12); the marriage to Livia (14); Antony's subservience to Cleopatra (16); Actium (17)—of which only the number of ships captured need come from the autobiography; his clemency to the relatives of his enemies (18); his well-known obsession with social distinctions (19); what we would call his superstitious nature (20); and presumably his own version of his relations with Cornelius Gallus (23). These fragments are too meager and too elusive to displace the other complete and utterly revealing text.

So much for the Roman world. It is clear that there was neither reticence about self-advertisement—indeed, an understanding that it was an integral part of aristocratic life and political advancement—nor a shortage of well-tried genres in which it could be practiced. Augustus' *Res Gestae* perfectly fits the genre indicated by its title. The fact that it was originally set up outside his tomb does not contradict that. It was without problem also inscribed on temples (as other *res gestae*) and on statue bases. The fundamental fact is that it is written in the first person, which unquestionably identifies it as autobiographical. It is not a standard autobiography, because it deals largely with public history. With a numbing more than one hundred twenty first person singular verbs, however, that public history has been converted into autobiography.

No later Roman emperor is known to have left such a substantial post-mortem self-assessment. What of antecedents? There are two examples which easily come to mind—though it is certain that they would not have occurred to Augustus. He had probably never read either. The more famous and the one offering closer parallels is the Behistun inscription set up by Darius of Persia after he seized the throne in 522 (he died in 486).[7] The links are obvious. It was composed by the king in the first person. It is an apologia for his taking power. It commemorates the founding of a dynasty (Darius was one of the Achaemenids, but from a branch that had not held power for five generations). There are also differences. The inscription is not on Darius' tomb, but on an inaccessible cliff. It is trilingual (Old Persian, Babylonian, and Elamite), accompanied by a graphic relief showing Darius triumphing over his rivals. It was set up shortly after his accession, and essentially tells the story of his first year out of thirty-six. It pays great attention to the gods. And it is even longer than the RG (thirty-one hundred words in Persian). It employs the technique of formulaic repetition: no fewer than seventeen times Darius repeats the litany: "Ahuramazda bore me aid; by the favor of Ahuramazda my army smote X exceedingly." Darius also reveals a vulnerability that is quite foreign to Augustus: he repeatedly asks the reader to believe what he says is the truth: "do not think it a lie!"—but it was, in at least one of its most basic claims, that the nine rebels had all been crushed within a year. And copies were designedly to be distributed in the provinces of the empire, whereas the RG was originally to be seen only in Rome at Augustus' tomb.

[7] Trans. R. Kent, *Old Persian* (New Haven, 1953), 119–134.

The story purports to tell of an impostor Gaumata, who took power after the death of Cambyses, claiming to be that king's brother, and how Darius alone dared oppose him. The strange thing is that almost the entire Persian Empire supported the rebels. It took a year's bitter and incessant struggle to crush them. Despite the constant assertions of truth-telling (a Persian virtue), scholarly skepticism is on high alert. Most believe that Gaumata was not an imposter, but Cambyses' real brother—so the usurper was Darius.

The other precedent is indeed a contemporary of Augustus, Antiochos I of Commagene (c. 69–36).[8] This is a commonly cited parallel text, and at first sight the connections seem strong: the inscription was set up at the king's mausoleum at Nemrud Dagh; it is in the first person; the stated aim is to record the king's benevolence; he rates piety the sweetest of all possessions; throughout his life he was the most trustworthy guardian of his kingdom; and he is writing at the end of a long life. The contrasts are, however, more important. Of the one hundred twenty lines, almost one hundred are devoted to a description of the site: the statues of the gods, and of himself, and of Tyche (Fortune), and the establishment of priests and festivals, especially for the commemoration of each month (!) of his birthday and accession day. In other words, the main point of the inscription is the establishment of the king's cult (it is significant that an early view of the purpose of the RG was that it was Augustus' claim to divinization). The text also pays great attention to Tyche, which ensured the king's escape from great dangers: Augustus is uncharacteristic of Romans in not acknowledging his debt to Fortuna.

The most obvious successor to the RG was similarly written by someone who, in turn, did not know the earlier text, but the similarities are so obvious that it was instantly given the same title of *res gestae*, this time of King Shapur of Persia (240–272).[9] At the famed burial ground of the kings at Naqsh-I-Rustam is a fire temple, on which is engraved the account by Shapur of his wars with Rome, again in three languages (Parsi, Pahlavi, and Greek). Like the RG, then, there is a Greek translation: it is essentially a record of military successes, most notably the capture of the emperor Valerian. On the other hand, like the Behistun inscription, Shapur begins by stating his royal descent and therefore his legitimacy; this

[8] *OGIS* 383; S. Burstein, trans., *The Hellenistic Age* (Cambridge, 1985), 63–66.

[9] M. Dodgeon and S. Lieu, trans., *The Roman Eastern Frontier* (London, 1991), 34, 35, 45, 50, 57.

is one of the few such royal inscriptions that clearly states the motive for composing and publishing the text: "so that whoever comes after us will realise this renown, this courage, and this sovereignty of ours." As an example of Shapur's style, the capture of Valerian is the obvious choice; it may be compared with Augustus' account of his Parthian "triumphs":

> Caesar Valerian came upon us. There was with him a force of seventy thousand men … A great battle took place beyond Carrhae and Edessa between us and Caesar Valerian, and we took him prisoner with our own hands, as well as the other commanders of the army, the Praetorian Prefect, senators and officials. All these we took prisoner and deported to Persia. We also burnt, devastated, and pillaged Syria, Cilicia and Cappadocia.

Alongside a plethora of Roman parallel texts, it is striking that the other most suggestive parallels for the RG come from centuries of self-advertisement and justification by Oriental kings.

Interpretation

The lack of a stated intention and the unique features of the RG have contributed to what can only be described as a superficiality and naïveté in its interpretation, despite the enormous attention that it has received now for centuries, probably unparalleled with a text of this importance. The inscription is virtually unnoticed by historians of the Roman Empire (Gibbon is an exception) before Mommsen's first edition (1865). Of its style, Viktor Gardthausen in 1904 probably gave the most memorable judgment: "not a word too many or a word too few."[10] Then he went on to note that it omitted the annexation of Galatia and Judea, the suppression of the Pannonian revolt, and any mention of the author's parents.

Basic, surely, is a definition of its purpose. Martin Schanz and Karl Hosius in their standard history of Latin literature described it as "a simple narrative of his deeds … without importunity or exaggeration." More sophisticated views did intrude. There was "the bias of legitimisation in every line," according to Leon Homo (1935). Wilhelm Weber the next year identified some of the trumpeted themes: selflessness, acting not for his own ambition but in answer to others' requests, observance of tradition, generosity, and moderation. According to Jean Gagé, it was to show

[10] V. Gardthausen, *Augustus und seine Zeit* (Leipzig, 1891), 1.31284.

that his position was based on law and collegiality, or as Friedrich Vittinghoff put it so well (1959), boundless ambition has been transformed into selfless dedication to the state.[11]

What, then, of the vital matter of audience? Jean Béranger imagined Romans picnicking by the mausoleum, which induced him to suggest that the text should be taken in a broad, not narrow, legal sense. Dietmar Kienast, on the other hand, stressed that it was first read in the senate. The most interesting suggestion is that of Zvi Yavetz, that it was directed toward the young *equites*, the group Augustus so relied on for his administration.[12]

For any historical source, however, there is one question which must be faced above all others: its reliability. In his standard second edition (1883), Mommsen focused on "omissions": Augustus names no military leaders outside the imperial family, he mentions no disasters (!), he reveals no secrets of his power. Victor Duruy similarly complained that it did not mention the proscriptions or the Varian disaster. Frank Adcock was a little more subtle. "Truth is not all its purpose: … he presents his constitutional position with more attention to formal correctness than its actual predominance." Ronald Syme was concerned at the traducing of enemies. It was the truth, but not the whole truth, asserted Hugh Jones, citing omissions and distortions concerning the civil wars, his opponents, the Pannonian revolt, the Varian disaster, the Arabian campaign, and his constitutional position. Herman Bengtson claimed that he hid his proconsular imperium.[13] Most of these claims will not withstand a moment's reflection—or a close reading of the text.

The most astonishing assertion in this regard is that the RG, being a public document, cannot have told a lie, as claimed by Paul Petit, Hugh Jones and Peter Brunt and John Moore. As long ago as 1844 Emile Egger saw that it would have been difficult for most contemporaries to check anything Augustus had written. And more recently Jochen Bleicken has

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[11] M. Schanz and K. Hosius, *Römische Literatur* (Munich, 1914–1935), 2.14; L. Homo, *Augustus* (Paris, 1935), 285; W. Weber, *Princeps. Studien zur Geschichte des Augustus* (Stuttgart, 1936), 147, 155, 160, 174; J. Gagé, *Res Gestae divi Augusti*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1950), 34; F. Vittinghoff, *Kaiser Augustus* (Göttingen, 1959), 10 ff.

[12] J. Béranger, *L'aspect idéologique du principat* (Basel, 1953), 207; D. Kienast, *Augustus* (Darmstadt, 1982), 174 ff.; Z. Yavetz, in *Caesar Augustus, Seven Aspects*, eds. F. Millar and E. Segal (Oxford, 1984), 26.

[13] Mommsen *Res Gestae divi Augusti*, Berlin 1883, v; V. Duruy, *Histoire des romains* (Paris, 1875), 4.359; F. Adcock, in *Cambridge Ancient History* 10 (1934), 593; R. Syme, *Roman Revolution* (Oxford, 1939), 523; A.H.M. Jones, *Augustus* (London, 1970), 168; H. Bengtson, *Kaiser Augustus* (Munich, 1981), 269 ff.

demonstrated that Augustus had so changed reality by the time of his death that not only was no one able to challenge his version, but that no one wanted to—apart from a historian like Tacitus![14] The insights of Luca Canali, finally, suggest a paradox: that Augustus revealed more of the truth than he realized or intended, most notably his autocracy: he was the dispenser of clemency (RG 3), the arbiter of social class and membership of the senate (8), and corrupter of the populace (15).[15]

The Matter of Chronology

The RG presents itself as the achievements of the first emperor, but at the same time of the successor of half a millennium of Republican tradition and an almost timeless Roman domination of the world, albeit raised under him to a higher level than ever before. Dates are not of great consequence in this mentality, yet they are sometimes needed and are even, paradoxically, on occasion rather distracting.

Where Augustus wished to date an event, there were a number of options open to him. From 31 to 23 BC he could mention his own consulships, as we find in many inscriptions. After 23 he could quote the numbered years of his tribunician power. One thinks automatically of his coinage, where the office was most commonly cited, but the year was given in Rome only on gold and silver, not the bronze. The only problematic period was obviously the 40s and 30s, the years of the triumvirate, which he had explicitly limited to ten years (43–33). That would not have looked good, and, in fact, during that period none of the three used the office for dating: they were simply *IIIvir r.p.c.c.*, without year.

The RG sometimes shows the closest attention to dating: the thrice-declined curatorship of laws and morals (RG 6), the three censuses (8), the donatives on seven occasions to the plebs (15), pensions for the veterans on six occasions (16), building works on two occasions (20), and the "First Settlement" (34). These instances employ a variety of dating methods: mostly others' consulships (6, 8, 16), his own (8, 15, 16, 20, 34), or the year of his tribunician power (15). Where single dates are given,

[14] P. Petit, *La paix romaine* (Paris, 1967), 221; Jones, *Augustus*, 168; P. Brunt and J. Moore, *RGDA* (Oxford, 1967), 3; E. Egger, *Examen critique des historiens anciens de la vie et du règne d'Auguste* (Paris, 1844), 31; J. Bleicken, *Augustus* (Berlin, 1998), 509 ff.

[15] L. Canali, "Il manifesto del regime augusteo," *Riv. cult. class. et med.* 15 (1973), 151–175.

again they are others' consulships (1, 5, 11, 12, 17, 18, 22) or his own (1, 21, 22, 35). He also dates the writing of the RG to his thirty-seventh year of tribunician power (4.4), his fortieth year as *princeps senatus* (7.2) and his seventy-sixth year of age (35). Most striking of all is the revelation that he regarded his own life as marking an era: down to his birth (13) and his position as princeps (13, 30, 32).

Many parallel matters, on the other hand, are left undated. And the contrast is striking: his military honors such as ovations, triumphs, and salutations as *imperator* (victorious general); supplications (thanksgivings to the gods) (4); the five occasions on which he received a colleague in tribunician power (6); the three purges of the senate (8); the three occasions on which the Quirinus gate was closed (13); all but two items in the building program (19–21: temples in 28 BC and roads in 27 are the exceptions); sixty-five out of sixty-seven games and spectacles (22–23: the Saecular Games and the first games of Mars are the exceptions); and the entire foreign policy section (26–33). In most of this Augustus' accounting mentality is on show. As well, the military honors are meant to suggest timeless success, collegiality is the focus in references to tribunician power, there are special reasons for reticence about the senate and the Quirinus Gate (see below), the emphasis is on the entire remaking of Rome in the building program, the two most important of all the games are dated, and the foreign policy chapters focus on Roman power and world extent. Chronology is secondary.

If we divide the RG into major periods, some features appear. It is remarkable that down to 31 BC the account provides only two dates: the consulship of Pansa and Hirtius and his own (both 43 BC) (1.2, 4). To the second period (30–23 BC) belong many of the given dates, when Augustus held his fourth to eleventh consulships: cos. 4 (30 BC): land for veterans (16.1); cos. 5 (29 BC): increasing the patricians (8.1), donatives (15.1, 3), the crown gold (21.3); cos. 6 (28 BC): the census (8.2), temple rebuilding (20.4), the beginning of the First Settlement (34.1); cos. 7 (27 BC): the via Flaminia (20.5), the completion of the settlement (34.1); cos. 10 (24 BC): donatives (15.1); cos. 11 (23 BC): distribution of food (15.1). In all these cases, Augustus mentions only himself, not his colleagues. That is the greatest irony, because in his famous statement that he always had colleagues in his magistracies (34.3), centuries of analysis have produced only one office to which this can apply: the consulship 27–23! Yet these colleagues were, as we might expect, almost without exception close supporters of the Princeps. The third period is 22–2 BC. Now Augustus holds tribunician power (and from 19 BC apparently

consular power). He almost always uses the ordinary consuls: for 22 BC: the refusal of the dictatorship (5.1); 19 BC: first refusal of the curatorship (6.1) and his return from the East (11)—note that the same consulship is referred to in two different ways; in the former case, Augustus has named the suffect first (!); 18 BC: the second refusal of the curatorship (6.1) and tax subsidies (18); 17 BC: the Saecular Games (22.2); 14 BC: lands for veterans (16.1); 13 BC: Augustus' return from the West (12.2); 12 BC: his election as pontifex maximus (10.2; note here that Augustus gives not the names in the *fasti* [Messalla and Quirinus] but the two in office at the time); 11 BC: the third refusal of the curatorship (6.1), and also, but dated by trib. pot. 12, donatives to the plebs (15.1); 8 BC: the second census (8.3; note that Asinius Gallus later suffered *damnatio memoriae*, but his name is preserved here!); 7 BC: cash for veterans (16.2); 6 BC: ditto; 5 BC: largesse to the plebs—using both trib. pot. 18 and cos. 12 (15.2); 4 BC: money for veterans (16.2); 3 BC: ditto; 2 BC: donatives to the plebs (15.4), the first Martial games (22.2), and the title Pater Patriae (35), all dated by cos. 13, and cash for veterans, dated by Caninius and Fabricius (16.2): there were, in fact, five consuls this year, with Augustus holding power down to August, and Caninius and Fabricius in office at the end of the year, when obviously the money was paid. Very few events, finally, are dated in the last thirteen years of the Principate: AD 6: the military treasury (17.2); AD 14: the third census (8.4), both by consuls.

It is significant that some thirty-two consuls are named in the RG, mostly from the middle years of the Principate, when the old aristocracy was back in prominence. Augustus could have dated by his years of tribunician power, which, after all, would have taken much less space, although he normally refers to the consuls by only praenomen and cognomen. No fewer than four Lentuli appear. Augustus' consulships in the 20s, an office which had to be abandoned, are paradoxically paraded, and what Tacitus called the *summi fastigii vocabulum* is used for dating only twice!

When all that is said, perhaps the most stunning date in the whole document is the one with which the text opens: *annos undeviginti natus* (at the age of nineteen), as Octavian bursts onto the world stage.[16]

[16] R. Ridley, "RGDA. The Problem of Chronology," in *Hestiasis, Studi Calderone* (Messina, 1986), 2.265–291.

The Main Messages

We may identify the themes that Augustus stressed in each chapter. Every chapter contributes to the total picture of his career and character which he wished to leave to posterity.

1. He held power (continuously) from the age of nineteen (RG 1).
2. He was the defender of the freedom of the state (2).
3. One of his main virtues was *pietas* (a sense of duty to family and gods) (2, 19, 20, 24).
4. He acted legally (2, 16).
5. He was attentive (where possible, note) to clemency (3).
6. He always modestly declined honors and offices offered to him by others (4, 5, 6, 10).
7. Yet his tally of offices exceeded all predecessors (4, 7), not least his priesthoods.
8. He was the restorer of social morality (8).
9. Everyone understood his indispensability (9, 10).
10. He was the bringer of peace (13).
11. He was unbelievably generous (15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22).
12. He restored and beautified Rome and improved its amenities (19–21).
13. He was reticent in self-promotion (20).
14. He was the ever-victorious commander-in-chief (25–30), taking power at others' insistence; his armies and fleets penetrated further than any before them: no land was beyond his reach (27).
15. In so many matters, he was first or did what he did better than others (26.4, 30.1, 31.1, 32.3).
16. What others lost, he recovered (29).
17. Where diplomacy would suffice he was trusted to the ends of the earth (31–33).
18. When his job was done, and the state saved, he resigned all powers and henceforth relied on his authority (34).
19. His great virtues were acknowledged by the state (34.2).
20. At the age of sixty-one he was given the highest honor the state could bestow: Pater Patriae (35).

In all of this one recalls Gardthausen's epigram: "Not a word too many, not a word too few." There are some striking exceptions. Pleonasm has been introduced in an attempt to enhance his honors (4.1): see below; and in 26.4: "in the region of the eastern sun," where he means simply "to

the east," or "eastwards." There is ambiguity in 1.1 where he writes of his adlection to the senate (see below). There is muddle that no commentator can sort out in his three chapters on the building program (19–21), which he attempts to distinguish by three very separate verbs, but the categories do not hold up (see below). There is also inconsistency in his account of donatives (15), where he oscillates between *sestertii*, *nummi*, and *denarii*, and where the veterans intrude among the plebs and out of chronological order.

The RG is set out not chronologically but in what modern commentators see generally as a tripartite organization: career and honors (1–14), benefactions (15–24), and foreign policy (25–33), with a stunning climax in a return to his most prized actions and honors (34–35). For the purposes of understanding the text as autobiographical, however, its main items will here be reorganized under obvious headings.

Early Years: His Rise to Supreme Power

There is no introduction—nothing, in fact—before 44 BC. Augustus does not even name himself; his name is referred to (10), could be deduced from chapters 11 and 12, but is finally revealed only in chapter 34. Perhaps even more striking is the omission of the names of his real parents, although it was not the custom in Roman inscriptions to mention one's mother. One suspects that we have here the "self-made man," who thinks the world begins and ends with himself. There is no lack, however, of relatives. His nephew Marcellus is alluded to indirectly (21.1): this was his first intended heir. Agrippa appears twice (8.2, 22.2). One would never know that this was the man without whose help Octavian would have gone down in Sicily or at Actium. Tiberius, stepson, adopted son and heir, appears five times: 8.4, the census in AD 14; 12.2: consul in 13 BC when Augustus returned from the West; 16.2: consul in 7 BC when Augustus paid pensions to veterans; 27.2: as Augustus' agent in the East; and 30.1: in Pannonia. Gaius and Lucius Caesar, Agrippa's sons, Augustus' grandsons, have their honors turned round to Augustus' credit (14), Gaius acted in the East (27.2), and they were the dedicatees of the Basilica Julia (20.3). Presiding over all, however, is the ghost of Caesar, Augustus' great-uncle and father by adoption: the murdered parent (2), pontifex maximus (10.2), the deceased under whose will largesses are paid (15.1), the author of a building program (20.3, 35.1), and finally as Divus Julius (19.1, 21.2).

It is appropriate here to attempt (surely a vain hope) to put to rest one of the distractions that has occupied so much of modern commentators' attention: the fact that Augustus does not name his enemies—as if the text were entitled *res gestae M. Antonii*, for example. Antony is not named, but he is there, twice, as the faction that had suppressed the commonwealth (1.1) and "the person with whom I had been at war" (24.1). After Actium, in fact, he had suffered *damnatio memoriae* (Plut. *Ant*. 86), and his name was removed from the *fasti* but was afterwards restored. There is, as well, Sextus Pompey, referred to only under the pirate and slave war (25.1, 27.3; see below). Brutus and Cassius, finally, are simply subsumed under "those who killed my father" (2). In short, Augustus most skillfully managed to use his enemies where he needed them in the story to show off his own deeds, while at the same time condemning them to oblivion through anonymity.

The RG, in fact, gives no coherent account of Octavian's rise to power, the first fifteen years of his career (44–30 BC), when he was aged eighteen to thirty-three. The references, such as they are, are scattered throughout the text: his election as pontifex in 48 BC (RG 7); his raising of his first army in 44; his first imperium and first consulship, both in 43; Philippi in 42 (1–2); the triumvirate from 43 to 33 and his augurate c. 41 (7); his first ovation in 40 and the first salutation by his troops (4); the war with Sextus Pompey, the second ovation, and the grant of tribunician sacrosanctity, all in 36 (25, 27, 10); his second consulship in 33 (4); the western oath in 32 (25); the war with Antony (24, 27); and his third and fourth consulships 31–30 (4). What he did was extract successes and honors and treat them thematically. This is an extremely clever way to cover the most difficult part of his career.

"At the age of nineteen years by my private decision and at private expense I raised the army through which I liberated the commonwealth from the control of the faction which had suppressed it" (1.1).[17] The RG opens with brazen assertions of high treason (raising a private army) and cliché-ridden defamation of a consul of the Republic (Antony). The old politician looks back to the young revolutionary and still cannot admit that none of this would have been possible without the support of the Caesarian veterans and the party bankers. One is also faced instantly with the tension with which the entire document is infected—

[17] Translation of the passages from the RG is by Edwin Judge, who alone attempts to reproduce the original emphasis: *Augustus and Roman History* (Sydney, 1983).

between revolution and tradition. When the proconsul Lepidus (father of Octavian's colleague then overthrown rival!) by private decision led an army against Rome in 77, the "Last Decree of the Senate" (a declaration of martial law) was passed, and he was declared a public enemy (Sall., *Hist*. 1.77). As for freeing the state from a faction that oppressed its freedom, this is exactly what Caesar claimed in justification for beginning the civil war in 49 BC (Caes., *BC* 1.22)! The RG here is in contradiction with another source: coinage does not show the legend *vindex libertatis* (champion of freedom) until 31 BC. Furthermore, on his first move against Antony, Octavian's troops refused to follow him (App., *BC* 3.41–42)—naturally, both leaders claimed to be Caesar's heirs and were relying on his veterans. Antony, far from suppressing the state, marched off to his province of Cisalpine Gaul (App. 3.46). It was, in fact, to be Octavian in 43 BC who turned against the state the armies that it had given him.

There follows an ambiguity: "On that account, the senate coopted me into its order and conferred the *imperium* on me" (1.2). What does "on that account" (*eo nomine*) refer to: the raising of a private army or the liberation of the state from a faction? The first defeat of Antony was not until April 43 at Mutina, and Octavian was given *imperium* in January. Chaim Wirzubski proved that the reference was not to Antony's defeat, but rather to his departure from the city in late 44 (Cic. *Phil*. 3.35)![18] Augustus' version is a gross embellishment. Thanks, however, to Cicero's desperate vendetta against Antony, the young adventurer was given command under the consuls Hirtius and Pansa in January 43; they fought against Antony at Mutina in April, forcing him to retreat over the Alps, but both consuls died.

"The people then in the same year elected me consul … and one of the three commissioners for the settlement of the commonwealth" (1.4). The consulship was extorted in August 43 by a military coup (Suet., *Aug*. 26). The triumvirate was established in November 43. In the intervening three months a complete volte-face took place. The man whom Octavian had been so boldly and precociously promoted to destroy in January became in November his closest ally, along with the man Augustus would traduce as thief of the office of pontifex maximus. Antony, Lepidus and Octavian entered Rome with their armies, and by a tribunician bill they were appointed as a supreme junta (App. *BC* 4.7). To narrate these two

[18] C. Wirszubski, *Libertas as a Political Ideal at Rome* (Cambridge, 1950), 100–106.

coups as standard elections is outrageous. In the most pedantic sense the statements may be defended—but as history they are nonsense.[19] "I was one of the three commissioners for the settlement of the commonwealth for ten successive years" (7). There certainly were two five-year grants (App., *BC* 5.95: Nov. 43–Dec. 38, renewed in Sept.–Oct. 37). Presumably, the renewal was to link up retrospectively with the end of the earlier grant, so 37–33. And it is noteworthy what stress Augustus puts on the oath of *tota Italia* in 32, the great "mandate" suggesting that this filled the gap between the end of the triumvirate and his next consulship. The triumvirate, however, was an extraordinary office with a purpose: *rei publicae constituendae causa*. In such cases, the power ran until the task was completed and then the holder(s) abdicated; for example, the classic dictatorship. Antony and Octavian arranged ahead, however, to be consuls in 31: that was meant to signal the return to ordinary office. And the decisive evidence that the year 32 was still triumviral is epigraphic: Octavian is IIIvir and consul designate III (for 31) (*CIL* 5.525 = *ILS* 77). This was first demonstrated by Ettore Cicotti in 1895.[20] And this is the power of which Antony was stripped in 32 (Dio 50.4.3, 20.5), while Octavian in that year sat between the two consuls as their superior (50.2.5). The two five-year grants making ten successive years can only be 43–33, but the evidence suggests, to the contrary, that the triumviral powers were held until essentially the First Settlement (28/27).

"Those who killed my father I drove into exile, avenging their crimes by legitimate procedures" (2). We, of course, know perfectly well who Augustus' father was—that is, his adopted father—but here he is given under the title so affecting to Romans, *pater meus*. Who else in the history of Rome punished his father's murderers by driving them into exile? What other exiled murderers made war on the state in revenge? This is an extraordinary example of the way Augustus had converted family or private history into state or public history. The murdered "father" was a hated dictator, whose removal, it was believed, would allow the restoration of the Republican constitution, which he had subverted. Equally significant is the way Augustus here lays emphasis on "legitimate procedures" in punishing his enemies. In fact, the assassins of Caesar

[19] G. Boissier, "Le testament politique d'Auguste," *Revue des deux mondes* 44 (1863), 735–747 at 735; A. Heuss, "Zeitgeschichte als Ideologie," in *Monumentum Chiloniense* (*Festschrift Erich Burck*), ed. E. Lefevre (Amsterdam, 1975), 55–95 at 88.

[20] E. Cicotti, "La fine del secondo triumvirato," *Riv. fil.* 2 (1895), 80–93.

were tried en masse and in absentia, and all were condemned. Octavian presided. Only one juror voted for acquittal: his name was added to the list of the proscribed (App., *BC* 3.95). This was an extraordinary court, even though there was a standing court to try murder cases. In short, the men who were otherwise known as "the last Republicans" are turned into enemies of the state. And this is the closest Augustus comes to mentioning the proscriptions: the lists of enemies of the triumvirs was simply drawn up by them from the end of 43 and published, which allowed them to be killed with impunity, their property confiscated, and their heirs disenfranchised. Thousands perished. We could hardly expect Augustus at the end of his life to recall such unpleasantness.

"When they [Caesar's assassins] subsequently made war on the commonwealth. I twice defeated them in battle" (2). Not even the official Augustan account in the *fasti* went as far as that (Ehrenberg and Jones, *Documents illustrating the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius*, 54): all it stated was that Octavian defeated Brutus at the "second battle at Philippi," 23 October 42. It was commonly admitted that at the first battle a few weeks earlier, Octavian was ill and that the camp he was supposed to be guarding was overrun (even Vell. 2.70; Suet. *Aug.* 13; Dio 47.41–45). It was, in fact, none other than Maecenas and Agrippa who revealed that Octavian had hidden in the marshes for three days (Pliny, *Nat. His.* 7.148). There was only one victor at Philippi, and that was Antony, as the whole world knew and as the subsequent division of the Roman world demonstrated.

"The sea I freed of pirates" (25.1); "Sicily and Sardinia, after they were seized in the slave wars, were recovered by me" (27.3). Augustus has thus nothing to say about his career between Philippi and the defeat of Sextus Pompey in 36 BC. He had been left to settle the vast number of veterans after Philippi, which had led to the "Perusine War" (41–40 BC). The heir to the Republican party was Sextus Pompey, son of Pompey the Great, who commanded a fleet that menaced Italy. The triumvirate was, in fact, in 39 enlarged to include Pompey. In the very next year, however, Octavian declared war on him, only to suffer defeats in battle and losses in storms until his trusted lieutenant Agrippa won the battle of Naulochos in Sicily in September 36.

To refer to Pompey as a pirate is outrageous: he was the leader of the Republican cause and the son of the most famous general of the late Republic, who had himself won a real war against pirates (in 67 BC). The title was, however, the standard way to refer to a rival admiral, and simply reveals the fear that he inspired in Octavian by his blockade of Italy and his defeat of Octavian again and again. Completely concealed is the

fact that not only had he been taken into the triumvirate, but his daughter had also been betrothed to Octavian's nephew (App., *BC* 5.72–73; Dio 48.36, 38). On the matter of slaves, it was Octavian who employed them (Suet., *Aug.* 16; Dio 48.49). The most extraordinary revelation concerning this "pirate" and "slave leader" is the fact that among the many leading Republicans with him[21] were relatives of Octavian: Julia (Antony's mother), Scribonius Libo (Octavian's brother-in-law), and even Augustus' wife-to-be, Livia!

"The whole of Italy spontaneously swore the oath of loyalty to me and demanded me as leader in the war which I won at Actium. The same oath was sworn by the provinces of the Gauls, the Spains, Africa, Sicily and Sardinia" (25.2). Again there is a considerable gap—from the end of the war against Pompey to the preparations for Actium—of four years. Following the defeat of Pompey (who fled to Asia where he was killed in 35 BC), Octavian was strong enough to move against Lepidus and strip him of all military power (but not of his office of pontifex maximus). While Antony was occupied fruitlessly (as he had been since 40) with his quest for success against Parthia, Octavian undertook campaigns in Illyricum (35–33 BC), training his armies. Things came to a head in January 32, when Octavian seized control of the senate and the two pro-Antonian consuls fled to Antony. Antony divorced Octavian's sister, Octavia, and Octavian claimed to have obtained Antony's will from the Vestals, which revealed Antony's compromising relationship with Cleopatra. He was stripped of powers, and war was declared on Cleopatra. It is at this point that the famous oath was taken. Augustus' keyword here is "spontaneously." The truth is that there were violence and bribes (Dio 50.6, 11, 51.4) and riots over taxation for the war (50.10). The terms of the oath probably included staying loyal to his cause, protecting his person, keeping the same enemies and friends, and sparing no effort in the war. Punishments promised to traitors or backsliders would have been dramatic. The oath was presumably organized by the political leaders in all the Italian cities and towns (except Bononia; Suet., *Aug.* 17), and was perhaps taken by all adult males; provincial arrangements would have been much less formal. Augustus indicates that the oath invested him as leader against Antony. One may compare the oath of the civilian population to Antony in 44 (App., *BC* 3.46; Dio 45.13), but he was consul. Augustus has, in fact, reversed the nor-

[21] The list is given in Ridley, *The Emperor's Retrospect*, 185.

mal order of events: the leader was normally appointed, then an oath was taken to him. The attempt to involve the provinces in his "appointment" is an imposture: only the Roman people could confer office. This is, in sum, one of the most blatant examples of his transformation of his own ambition into a response to requests to serve (or save) the state.[22]

"Beneath my standards at that time there served more than seven hundred senators" (25.3). The culmination came at Actium, 2 September 31. The use of the verb *militare* is a gross overstatement. It means to serve in the army under arms. Most of these senators, if the number is to be taken seriously, were safe at home. There is something more distorted that follows. Augustus adds that eighty-three of these senators either before or after were consuls, and about one hundred seventy were priests. He is claiming that the most illustrious nobility fought on his side in 31. The opposite is the case: they were rewarded during his regime for their support in his rise to power. And the question that surely arises is: how exactly would Augustus know such statistics? He must have kept the most detailed dossiers on the aristocracy!

"After I had extinguished the civil wars, having been by unanimous agreement placed in full control" (34.1). Despite the many attempts to link the portentous statement about being in full control to various events from 32 to 29, it refers most obviously to Octavian's unchallengeable position as generalissimo of the Roman world after 30, with the deaths of Antony and Cleopatra and the conquest of Egypt. All opposition had been crushed, and there was no rival left. The perversion of the truth lies in the representation of this as a unanimous and willing mandate again (like the Italian and western oaths). If there was any "consensus" it was the silence of the dead opposition. We note with interest that he admits that the final conflict had been civil—he had, after all, ostentatiously declared war on Cleopatra—but its origin was owed overwhelmingly to Octavian, with the collaboration of Cicero.[23]

"As victor I spared all who sought mercy being citizens" (3.1). Here is obviously another attempt to conceal or reverse the history of the proscriptions. The reference may be to the whole of his career, but applies especially to the period down to 30. To the very contrary, citizens seeking mercy were denied it after Philippi (Suet., *Aug.* 13), after Perusia (15), and

[22] M. Caspari, "The iuratio Italiae," *CQ* 5 (1911), 230–235; T.R. Holmes, *The Architect of the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1928), 1.144–145.

[23] W. Seyfarth, "Potitus omnium rerum," *Philol.* 101 (1957), 305–323.

a son of Antony after Actium (17). The most telling revelation, however, is what Augustus dares to admit: that citizens could be spared if they begged him for mercy. This goes far beyond Caesar's *offering* mercy to his enemies—and he was murdered for that.

Offices and Powers

"In my sixth and seventh consulships … I transferred the commonwealth from my power to the discretion of the senate and people of Rome … After that time I was in influence (*auctoritas*) superior to all, while of power (*potestas*) I possessed no greater measure than the rest of my colleagues in each magistracy" (34.1, 3). This is the penultimate chapter of the RG. It is the central statement of the whole document, the transition from the rise to power in civil war to his position as constitutional head of state for forty years. After this comes only the bestowal of the title *Pater Patriae*. The transition was marked by the great "abdication." If not before, he now formally laid down the triumviral powers since their purpose, "the reconstruction of the state," had been accomplished—primarily by eliminating his two colleagues. Such was the purpose to which ultimately the powers were put. Most important, however, is what he does not bother to note: he was reinvested with a giant *provincia* (sphere of operations), which comprised the most important military areas of the empire—but the whole RG presupposes that. In sum, he maintained total power, perhaps even enhanced it, because now again there was a mandate: he had resigned and been reinvested. This is probably the most significant case in the whole text where Augustus decides what he wishes to record and have remembered, and that is his prerogative. Again, however, it is half the story and makes history unintelligible.

He now wished to stress that all his offices had colleagues. That does not apply to most of his powers, because he separated power from office: censorial, tribunician and consular power. There were magistrates holding these posts, but they can in no way be considered colleagues of the head of state, who is not only not subject to the restrictions of the respective colleges, but also holds an unequalled and unprecedented accumulation of these prerogatives. For only five years Augustus had what even begins to look like normal colleagues: in the consulship 27–23. We can presumably also disregard his colleagues in the priesthoods (RG 7.3), because they were not classed as "magistracies," and again

because of the unprecedented accumulation (two priesthoods in the Republic for one man were extraordinary), and because of his position after 12 BC as pontifex maximus (the chief priest).

In fact, Augustus has attempted to establish a very false antithesis between the limited *par potestas* (equal power) for a few years relative to a handful of magistrates, and his *auctoritas* in the last *forty* years of his dominance contrasted with that of everyone else. In the last analysis, however, his political domination both before and after 28/27 is paraded. His position in the state and his indispensability are demonstrated by the fact that everyone prayed for his health (RG 9.2).

"The consulship also offered to me at that time on an annual and perpetual basis I did not accept" (5.3). After the great "abdication" and his reinstallment, it is obvious that Augustus intended to rule by consulships, one after another. This may be called the "Marian solution," because the most striking precedent was the run of consulships held by C. Marius (104–100 BC) in the great crisis of the German invasions. It is extraordinary that Augustus adopted this solution to ensure his control of the state, given Marius' *popularis* connections, but he was Augustus' great-uncle's uncle. He should also have realized that occupying one half of the most sought-after annual magistracies in the state, even under the Principate, would soon lead to a crisis. Perhaps we shall never uncover what really led to the second "abdication" in 23 BC, but what is clear is that he gave up the consulship (to hold it only twice more in his life, for ceremonial reasons, in 5 and 2 BC) and moved to tribunician and proconsular powers. He then left for the East, and did not return for four years. "At that time" is very vague, and the preceding date (5.1) is 22 BC. In that case, he had barely resigned from this crucial office than it was offered to him again on very attractive terms: the keys are "on an annual and perpetual basis." That much he did decline. What, however, might he have accepted? Dio, in fact, dates the offer of something similar, but not identical, to consular power for life, to 19 BC (54.10.5). Augustus is demonstrating his traditionalism in declining such an offer and his indispensability to the state in the wake of the "Second Settlement." It was the contribution of Hugh Jones in 1951 to have demonstrated that there is evidence (even in the RG 8.34) for Augustus holding consular power after 19.[24]

[24] A.H.M. Jones, "The Imperium of Augustus," *JRS* 41 (1951), 112–119, reprinted in his *Studies in Roman Government and Law* (Oxford, 1960), ch. 1.

"At the time of writing I am for the thirty-seventh year of tribunician power" (4.4). It is amazing that so many commentators have suggested that Augustus concealed his tribunician power! Nothing could be further from the truth. Here is the total tenure for all to see; he used it to enact measures for which he was offered a virtual dictatorship (6.2); five times he had a colleague (6.2), that is, in the power that came to designate his chosen successors; and, in fact, it was granted for life (10.1). That was obviously in 23 BC. Augustus was plebeian by birth but patrician by enactment, so office as tribune was illegal. The potency of it as a symbol of protection of the plebeians, as well as the prerogatives it possessed, especially initiative in legislation, made it the obvious replacement in 23 for the consulship. There is, however, something strange in his reference in 4.4. He is meaning to imply that his tribunician power was annual, but as he admits further on it was granted for life (10.1). It marked the years of his Principate, not the years of a Republican magistracy (Dio 53.17).

"I myself spontaneously on five occasions requested and received a colleague in tribunician power" (6.2). Augustus has immediately before specified the three dates on which he was offered the curatorship of laws and morals, and in so doing has named no fewer than six consuls. Why does he here not name the colleagues and specify the years of the five occasions? It is obvious that in this case neither of those is his emphasis—only his stress on both his own initiative ("spontaneously") and his care to preserve traditional collegiality. The colleagues were, of course, members of the imperial family: Agrippa in 18 and 13, and Tiberius in 7 BC, AD 4, and 13.

"The dictatorship offered to me both in my absence and in my presence both by the people and by the senate in the consulship of M. Marcellus and L. Arruntius I did not accept" (5.1). He offers no explanation for this remarkable offer of an office indelibly associated with two figures of the late Republic, Sulla and Caesar, but he goes on to speak of a crisis in the food supply, of which he took charge (*curator annonae?*), so that in a few days the problem was solved with stress on "my own expense and my own effort" (*impensa et cura mea*). This then, presumably, was what prompted the offer of the dictatorship. Augustus reveals how crucial the capital's food supply had become by this time (one recalls Pompey's special *curatio annonae* in 57 BC and the gravest threat to Octavian's own control of Italy by Sextus Pompey's blockade in the early 30s). Dio connects the dictatorship with the food supply and states that the initiative came from the people, not the senate (54.1); note Augustus' unusual order: by the people and senate. The offer also reveals a fundamental political truth:

that concern for traditional power was certainly a consideration with the old ruling class, and probably the equestrian class, but not with the people. They were happy to offer Augustus any powers he needed to maintain the new regime.

"When the senate and people agreed that I should be made custodian of laws and morals (*curator legum et morum*) with supreme power and alone (*summa potestate solus*), I did not accept any magistracy offered contrary to the traditional (*contra morem maiorum*)" (6.1). Yet another *recusatio*! It is dated precisely to three occasions, 19, 18, and 11 BC, and the reason for the refusal is specified: it was untraditional—but his father had held the office (Suet., *Jul.* 76)! The obvious question is, did Augustus accept another office which was more traditional? His own answer is that he carried out what the senate desired when it offered him these enormous powers instead by tribunician power. In this assertion, however, he is seemingly contradicted by both Suetonius (*Aug.* 27) and Dio (54.10, 30). The former states that he had control of customs and laws for life, by which he carried out the census three times; the latter has the office assigned in 19 and renewed in 12 BC. They are not the only contradictors: the poets refer to the *cura* (Hor., *Ep.* 2.1.1–4; Ovid, *Met.* 15.833–837, *Trist.* 2.233–234). It is to be noted that the office was offered a further two times after Augustus refused it—but surely the Senate and people understood why he refused it the first time. As for the use instead of tribunician power "then," to what time does he refer? There are three separate consular dates. And what exactly did the senate wish him to do (*quae tum per me geri senatus voluit*)? Dio refers to the need for some reform in 19 BC, and the poets constantly harp on this. Modern commentators have oscillated between accepting or rejecting Augustus' assertions here, as they have given more or less credence to the other two main sources and found them at variance with each other or in accord. In fact, Suetonius has a perpetual *cura morum legumque* for 28 BC, apparently influenced by the first senatorial revision and first census in 29–28, while Dio has two five-year grants in 19 and 10.

Why were the offers made when they were? The first two (19 and 18 BC are Augustus' dates) may be connected with the second senatorial revision in 18 (Dio 54.13). Augustus had returned from the East the year before and also passed moral legislation in 19 (Dio 54.10, 16). The third offer in 11 BC perhaps is associated with the third revision, which Dio dates variously to 13 or 11 (54.26, 35). As always, every word has to be considered. There are vital qualifiers here: without colleague and

with supreme power. The offer was extraordinary, but it might also mean that something less unusual *was* accepted. Anton von Premerstein saw this as the way out of the dilemma, especially since Augustus did not bother to reveal his power in the first census or in the three senatorial revisions. Syme, on the other hand, declared that Augustus did not need this power.[25] There is further vocabulary to be noted. Whereas the people and senate offered (*delatam*) the dictatorship and consulship (5.1, 3), here they were agreed (*consentientibus*) that he should be appointed: was there a vote or a formal offer? And the tribunician power sufficed only for legislation, not control of laws and morals, or senatorial revisions or censuses.

So much for powers accepted and powers rejected. There are also powers unspecified. "I selected the senate on three occasions" (8.2). Augustus goes on to give the fullest details regarding date and powers (except in the first case) for his three censuses. There could not be a stronger or more alerting contrast between reticence and frankness. Three words are devoted to three senatorial revisions, almost one hundred words to the three censuses. The *lectiones* can be dated to 29 (Dio 52.42), 18 (54.13), and 13/11 BC (54.26, 35). The revision of the senate list was, in the Republic, the function of the censors, but the task was now highly complicated because, in the upheavals of the late Republic and the civil wars, the senate had grown far beyond its normal greatly enlarged membership of six hundred from the time of Sulla to approximately one thousand. To pare it back to six hundred must have been a formidable and dangerous task—as we are told (Suet., *Aug.* 35). On the nature of Augustus' powers, we have only RG 6.1 (see above).

"In my sixth consulship I conducted a census of the people with M. Agrippa as my colleague … Then on a second occasion by virtue of my consular imperium I held the *lustrum* [ritual purification to mark the completion of the census] alone … And on a third occasion by virtue of my consular imperium I held the *lustrum* with Ti. Caesar my son as colleague" (8). The three censuses are dated precisely to 28 and 8 BC and AD 14, and the powers specified are consular (the vital evidence that Augustus did possess consular power after 23 BC—unless the powers were granted temporarily only for this purpose)—except in the first case! The truth is revealed, in fact, by the *fasti*: in one of the last deeds of

[25] A. von Premerstein, *Werden und Wesen des Principats* (Munich, 1937), 152; followed by Jones, *Studies*, 25, and Blanche Parsi-Magdelain, "La cura morum et legum," *RHDFE* 42 (1964), 379–412; Syme, *RR*, 443.

Octavian before his change of name, he held the first census in 28 with *censorial* power (E&J 35). Here is irrefutable evidence that Augustus did wish to conceal some of his powers.

The powers of tribunes, consuls, and even censors were the foundation of Augustus' position in Rome. His vast provinces (Gaul, Spain, and Syria) he controlled first by his consular power, down to 23 BC, then by proconsular power, which was, in fact, *maius imperium proconsulare*, greater than proconsular power—greater, that is, than any other proconsul—so that if a clash occurred with another proconsul, Augustus would prevail. Dio (53.32.5) had told us that, but he was in general disbelieved until 1927 when the Cyrene Edicts were discovered (*SEG* 9.8; Lewis and Reinhold, trans., *Roman Civilisation*[3], 1.590–596), showing Augustus exercising power in a "senatorial" province.

One of the most fundamental misconceptions about the RG goes back at least to Eduard Meyer in 1903: that Augustus never mentions his *imperium proconsulare* and his rule over half the empire.[26] Many of the most eminent commentators have followed this line, even going so far as to suggest that Augustus was deliberately concealing his powers because they conflicted with some "restoration of the Republic," or, more innocently, that it was of no interest to his Roman audience. Once again, we must protest against the "façade theory" of the Principate: no one was not aware of the basis of Augustus' powers in a military monarchy. That was how he came to power, that was how he maintained his power. The RG reeks of his military domination: the civil and foreign wars he waged (3.1), the honors for his victories (4.12), the wars waged all over the Roman world by him or in his name (25–30), and the ubiquitous colonies of his veterans (28).

Augustus assembled a monopoly of priesthoods that would have flabbergasted a Princeps of the Republic. Then it was exceptional to hold more than one such place, primarily because places were limited (for example, for most of the Republic nine augurs and nine pontiffs), and the office was held for life. Compare Augustus: he was pontifex (from 48 BC), augur (from 41), XVvir sacris faciundis (from 37), VIIvir epulonum (from at least 16), one of the Arval Brethren (from 21?), one of the Titienses (date unknown), and a fetial (at the latest 32) (7.2). There was one last office, however, for which he waited a long time.

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[26] E. Meyer, "Kaiser Augustus," *HZ* 91 (1903), 385–431 = *KS* 1.425–474 at 459. Cf. W.K. Lacey, *Augustus and the Principate* (Leeds, 1977), 165.

"I refused to become high priest in place of my colleague during his lifetime though the people offered me that priesthood which my father had held. But some years later, on the death of the person who had seized it under cover of civil disorder, when the crowds poured in from all over Italy for my election, greater than ever before recorded at Rome, I did accept it" (10.2). The date is 12 BC. Few chapters in the RG are as outrageous as this. The whole message is of Augustus' *moderatio*, patience, and legality. The man who was his predecessor as pontifex maximus was Lepidus, referred to both as a "colleague" (in the pontifical college) and the man who seized the post under cover of civil war—as if anyone was able to excel Augustus in that activity. The truth is that he was a member of one of the most illustrious patrician families of the Roman nobility, an ancestor had held the office 180–152, and he was elected by his colleagues.[27] That counts for nothing with Augustus, who bases his claim on the fact that the office had been held by his father—as if he assumed it was his by inheritance. This is a truly astonishing revelation of his mentality. As another example of his liking for "mandates," his electorate was greater than ever seen before—but for what? Elections of the pontifex maximus? Or elections in general? Or any political event? The election was superfluous: there was only one candidate.

Honors

Offices are one thing, and they were certainly showered on Augustus. Equally, if not more important were his various honors, the true testimony to his standing in Rome and the empire.

"Twice I triumphed with ovation, and three times I held a curule triumph" (4.1). Few military distinctions were so marked in Rome as that between an ovation and a triumph. The former was definitely second class. Whereas the *triumphator* traveled in a chariot through the city to the Capitol, the general in an ovation walked or rode a horse. Their regalia was quite different, including a laurel crown for the *triumphator*, but a myrtle crown for the other. The ovation was awarded, in fact, where war had not properly been declared or waged against unworthy enemies such as slaves or pirates (exactly as in this case!), and where the victory was not hard won. The two ovations in question were for "making peace

[27] R. Ridley, "The absent pontifex maximus," *Historia* 54 (2005), 275–300.

with Antony" in 40 BC following the Perusine War (E&J 33), and for the victory over Sextus Pompey in 36 in the "pirate and slave war"! Having created this attempt to enhance his ovations, Augustus then invented an adjective for his triumphs: "curule." This embellishment is known only to Vell. 2.96.3 and Suet., *Aug.* 22. A triumph was a triumph.

"In my triumphs there were led before my chariot nine kings—or children of kings" (4.3). This total of royal captives probably exceeded the total taken by any Republican general. Given Augustus' attention to the names of minor kings in the East and in Britain (32), we are justified in asking for names. We can offer some four, of whom the most important are the two children of Cleopatra (Dio 51.21). The others are Adiatorix of Galatia (Strabo 12.3.6), and Alexander of Arabia (Dio 51.2). Significant is the way Augustus makes the most of the total, combining actual rulers and heirs to rule.

"The senate voted me further triumphs, all of which I resigned" (4.1). This comes just after Augustus had specified that he celebrated the three triumphs, two ovations, and was saluted imperator (for victories) twenty-one times, and before he notes that his legates celebrated fifty-one *supplicationes* (thanksgivings). We can in fact list only three other offers of triumphs, all for others' victories, of course: for Spain in 25 BC (Florus 2.3.3), Parthia in 20/19 (*RIC* 1^2 48), and Germany in 8 BC (Dio 55.6). Of these instances, the most important and lasting success was the second, but it was diplomatic; for the third the triumph was granted to Tiberius.

The highest military honors were followed by the highest political ones. "I have been head of the senate (*princeps senatus*) up until the day I wrote this, for forty years" (7.2). This post was awarded him in 28 BC (Dio 53.1), and he held it until the end of his life. It was the title given to the man whom the censors each fourth year placed at the head of the list of senators, the senior senator. It had been held in the Republic exclusively by patricians. Three generations of Fabii in succession had monopolized the honor in the mid-fourth to early third centuries, but the longest individual tenures, of twenty-seven years, were by Lepidus (179–152) and Aemilius Scaurus (115–188).

Augustus lists a whole series of extraordinary honors bestowed upon him from 28 BC (9–12): the senate decreed vows by the consuls and priests every five years for the Princeps' health; games were accordingly held during his lifetime, either by the four major colleges of priests, or by the consuls; all citizens, individually or in their organizations, offered prayers for his health; his name was inserted in the hymn of the Salian priests of Mars by senatorial decree; his person was made inviolable, like

that of the tribunes (this went back to 36 BC); altars were consecrated by the consuls on his return from the East in 19 BC, on which every 12 October the pontiffs and Vestals were to sacrifice (that day was named the Augustalia); and a delegation of senators went as far as Campania to welcome him (which he states was unprecedented). On his return from the West in 13 BC another altar was consecrated by senatorial decree, again with an annual sacrifice performed by even more dignitaries: magistrates, priests, and the Vestals.

The honors given him in the early 20s BC came in the aftermath of the civil wars and before the First Settlement (28/27). The end of the wars was marked in 29 by the triple triumph. There was a reasonable expectation that peace had finally returned after fifteen years of the most terrible bloodshed. That belief is understandable. The next outpouring of emotion was on his return from the East in 19. Augustus records the manifestations of popular feeling but does not explain them. He had been away before, in the West, after the First Settlement, especially in Spain from 26 to 24, but nothing parallel happened. Now following the Second Settlement, he had been away in the East. This settlement obviously signaled the failure of his first solution to the monstrous problem of how to remain in control of the state while reestablishing some semblance of traditional government. Within four years he had had to reinvent himself. A conspiracy either provoked his renunciation of the consulship, or—worse—responded to it the next year (Dio 54.3). Augustus took the opportunity to do several things at once: to leave Rome to see how it could survive without him, and to give some attention to the major foreign policy problem of the regime. The ploy worked brilliantly. Rome fell into chaos, especially over the very office which he had vacated, and he was begged to return (RG 5; Dio 54.12. 6, 10), and through Tiberius he achieved the most spectacular success in foreign policy of the Principate, the diplomatic triumph over Parthia (RG 29.2). Augustus claims that the delegation that came to meet him in Campania was unprecedented, but a much more impressive welcoming committee came to greet him at Brundisium on his return in 30 (Dio 51.4).

Augustus is very interested in the returns of 19 and 13 BC. He omits two other cases: the first is that in 30 after Actium and the conquest of Egypt. The honors offered him were spectacular: the triumph; the decoration of the temple of the deified Julius with the beaks of the captured ships; an arch at Brundisium and in the Forum. It was voted furthermore that he should be met by Vestals, Senate, and people; that his birthday and the

day of the battle should be declared anniversaries; that a new calendar should begin in Alexandria from the day it fell to Octavian; that he should have special seat in the theatre and a casting vote in the courts; that he might choose additional priests; and that the day on which he entered the city should be honored with sacrifices by the whole population and held sacred ever after (Dio 51.19–20). Many of these honors were declined—but that was one of Augustus' favorite topics.

The second omitted case is when Augustus returned in 7 BC, following Tiberius' crossing of the Rhine: the event was celebrated by games (Dio 55.8.3), and the setting up of a monument in the Campus (*CIL* 6.385 = *ILS* 95).

"Following the transfer of the state from his control to that of the senate and people, 'in return for this service I was by ruling of the senate named August, the doorposts of my house were officially dressed with laurel and the civic crown was fixed above my door, and a golden shield was set in the Julian senate-house testifying by its inscription that it was presented to me by the senate and people of Rome to mark my enterprise, clemency, justice and loyalty' " (34.2). It is significant that Augustus leaves to the last two chapters those honors which he regarded as the highest and most precious. It is noteworthy that he offers no comment on the name Augustus (see Suet., *Aug.* 8). The bay on his doorposts celebrated his victories in a personal and permanent way. The civic crown was awarded to a soldier who saved the life of another soldier in battle: metaphorically, the message was that Augustus had saved everyone's life by ending the civil wars. And the four virtues are meant to be seen at every turn in the rest of the document.

The culminating honor closes the whole text: "The senate and equestrian order and people of Rome unanimously saluted me Father of my Country" (35.1). This title was set up in three crucial points: in his house (on the Palatine), in the Julian senate-house (in the Forum), and in the Augustan Forum. This award was in 2 BC, when Augustus was sixty-one. The title not only recalled Romulus, the founder of Rome (whose name Augustus had notoriously been so anxious to have instead of Augustus), and Camillus, second founder after the Gallic sack of 390 BC, but it also echoed the importance of the *pater familias* in Roman society, the male head of each family, with technically power of life and death over all members. It was as if Augustus was *pater familias* to every Roman, or that they all became his clients.

There is one other honor that Augustus strangely omits, one that still affects us today: the renaming of the month Sextilis as August.

Economic Policies

It is significant that in this autobiographical account Augustus included such economic matters. They were obviously a matter of great pride to him, and he believed that his Roman audience would be very interested to read what he had done for them. Two much more important revelations lie here, although they are not stated: first, that Augustus was the richest man in the empire (and Ulrich Wilcken showed in 1931 that all monies mentioned were his own [!] thus demolishing Theodor Mommsen's interpretation of the RG as Augustus' rendering of accounts on the model of a Republican magistrate at the end of his term of office), and second, Augustus, obviously carried away boasting of his generosity, did not realize how these chapters could be understood, showing how he ensured the loyalty of the plebeians and the army: he bought it.

No fewer than one quarter of a million people received 300 *sestertii* (HS) in 44 BC from Caesar's will, 400 HS from booty in 29 (to celebrate Augustus' triumph), 400 HS in 24 (to celebrate his return from Spain), 400 HS in 12 (to celebrate his election as pontifex maximus); three hundred twenty thousand people received 60 *denarii* (240 HS) in 5, and two hundred thousand in 2 BC were given the same (these last two occasions celebrated the coming of age of his grandsons). And two hundred fifty thousand people each received twelve grain rations in a food shortage in 23 (15). Many commentators have noted something strange in this chapter: an oscillation between *sestertii*, *nummi* (apparently the same thing) and *denarii* (1 den. = 4 HS). In half the cases he does not indicate the reason for the donative; toward the end is the intrusion of a donative to one hundred twenty thousand veterans in their colonies of 1,000 *nummi* in 29. This seems out of context and is certainly out of chronological order.

Three chapters further on, Augustus states that from 18 BC he distributed food and money from his own granary and patrimony when the taxes were insufficient to pay, sometimes to one hundred thousand people, sometimes to many more (18). It is very strange that he does not specify how many times he did this (cf. 17.1: "four times with my own money I assisted the treasury"), and that he does not follow his usual practice of stressing the maximum number of recipients.

"Bread" was one thing; in Juvenal's famous phrase there were also circuses—eight gladiatorial games, three athletic shows, and twenty-seven other games—and the initial games of Mars with twenty-six beast hunts in which thirty-five hundred animals died, and a mock naval battle in 2 BC featuring thirty warships and three thousand men (22–

23). The most spectacular and significant, however, were the Saecular Games in 17 BC to mark the new era. What is striking, however, is that out of all these spectacles the naumachia was the most important to Augustus. It is—amazing to say—*the most detailed of all events in the whole RG*:

> An exhibition of naval warfare I gave the people on the other side of the Tiber, at a place where the grove of the Caesars is now, excavating the site to a length of 1,800 feet, and a breadth of 1,200 feet. Here thirty armoured vessels, either triremes or biremes, and a larger number of smaller size, engaged each other. In these fleets there fought, apart from the rowers, about 3,000 men. (23)

Augustus was obviously very impressed with the technical feat of preparing the basin and gives no date or motive. We rely on Dio (55.10.7). The date was 2 BC, and the reason was C. Caesar's expedition against Parthia. The contestants on the two sides of the pageant were Athens and Persia. The tragic end of those hopes was the death of the young man six years later, so only the grandiose spectacle is recalled, stripped of context.

Augustus finally announced that he had had to come to the assistance of the treasury four times, to a total of 150 million (17.1). Gifts to temples from booty totaled upward of 100 million, and to Italian towns and colonies in 29 BC was remitted crown gold, their contribution to his triumph, weighing 35,000 pounds. He henceforth refused it (21.2–3).

The arrangements for the troops and veterans are treated separately below, under "military matters."

Urban Policy

Three central chapters (19–21) are devoted to public works in Rome. Augustus lists more than one hundred buildings "built, completed or restored." Most of them were temples (so illustrating his *pietas*). Only a few have special notes: the portico of Octavius he allowed to bear its original name (19.1); and despite the great expense of the restoration of the Capitol and Theatre of Pompey, he inscribed his name on neither (20.1)—such modesty! We must remember, however, that monuments in Rome did change name as they were restored, that censors put their name on buildings which had been financed entirely by public monies, and that the Republic opened with a struggle over the dedication of the chief temple, which obviously entailed the record of the dedicator's name in an inscription (Livy 2.8).

The main trouble is that the three clearly distinct verbs used by Augustus (*feci*, 'I built'; *refeci*, 'I restored'; and *in privato solo feci*, 'I built on private land') are not adhered to in the subsequent respective lists. Nor is there any discernible order within chapters, either chronological, topographical, or architectural. Even the crucial words *aedes* (temple) and *templum* (a sacred area) are used indiscriminately.

In close association with the Ara Pacis was the transfer from Egypt of two obelisks, one set up in the Circus Maximus, the other in the Campus Martius. The lowering, transport, and re-erection of these monuments was a considerable feat (Plin., *Nat. His.* 36.70–73), and they must have constituted a striking addition to Roman topography, but Augustus does not include them.

In sum, he could boast that he had found Rome a city of brick and left it marble (Suet., *Aug.* 28)—but there is no such boast in the RG!

Augustus concentrates on the physical appearance of Rome in these chapters, and the associated costs by implication, although he does not indulge in his usual tallying (except for the eighty-two temples). Hardly anyone has noticed a stunning omission which would have accorded well with these chapters, although expenses could hardly be cited, and something of which he must have been very proud. Augustus includes nothing of his far-reaching administrative reforms, which revolutionized the government of the city and were a long-lasting heritage. These included the institution of the urban cohorts (a kind of police force), the curatorship of the water supply, ten curators of public works (traditionally handled by aediles and censors), five curators of the Tiber (flooding was an endemic problem and remained so until the late nineteenth century), a prefect of the food supply (an assured supply of food for the capital was a political priority), and the vigiles (fire brigade) under a prefect. These new posts, with the exception of the last two, who were equestrians, were held by senators. For the first time something was done about critical matters: a police force and a fire brigade. Augustus himself alludes to some of these problems in the RG (5.2, 18, 20.2), but for some reason that eludes us did not think his sound attempts to address them worth including.

Military Matters

It is of the greatest importance that in his autobiographical summation Augustus included the many military campaigns of his regime, some undertaken by himself, but mostly by others. As in the chapters on the

building program, where no discernible scheme underlies the sequence given, so here matters are organized by no obvious geographical or chronological order. He begins in the west (Gaul, Spain, Germany, the Alps, the naval expedition in the North Sea), then jumps east (Ethiopia, Arabia, Egypt, and Armenia), then tells of the many recovered standards east and west, and finally moves to the Danube. It is noteworthy that Augustus gives credit for these victories in really one case: Tiberius in Pannonia (30.1); Tiberius and Gaius are also mentioned as installing client kings in Armenia (27.2).

"The provinces of the Gauls and the Spains and also Germany, bounded by the ocean from Gades to the river Elbe, I pacified" (26.2). To judge by the Triumphal Acta, the victories in Gaul were won by C. Carrinas who triumphed in 28 BC, and M. Messala, who triumphed in 27 (E&J 35). Although Augustus himself was in Spain in 26 and 25, the triumphs were won by C. Calvisius (28) and Sex. Appuleius (26) (E&J 35), and later Agrippa completed the "pacification" (Dio 54.11). The statement on the pacification of Germany to the Elbe is undoubtedly the most contentious in the whole RG. Attempts were certainly made to extend the Roman frontier from the Rhine to the Elbe by Drusus, 12–9 BC (Dio 54.323, 36, 55.12), and then by Tiberius, 9–6 (Dio 55.6), but all came undone with the loss of three legions under Varus in AD 9 (Vell. 2.117–120; Dio 56.18–19). The statement is anything but vague (contra Syme)[28] and commentators have been desperate to exonerate Augustus of deceit: he wrote this before AD 9 and forgot to update it, or he refers only to the coastal strip, or he refused to admit defeat, or he was simply indicating unfinished business for his successors!

Agrippa had set up a strong defense on the Rhine in 19 BC (Dio 54.36), but disaster followed in 16 with the invasion of Gaul and the defeat of Lollius (Dio 54.20). Drusus (12–9) sought to crush the widening revolt, and Tiberius (9–6) is credited with the conquest to the Elbe (Vell. 2.97; Tac., *Ann*. 2.26; Dio 55.6). Domitius Ahenobarbus in AD 1 crossed the Elbe (Tac. *Ann*. 4.44). Tiberius again (4–6) reached the Elbe, but was forced to make peace by the Pannonian revolt (Vell. 2.105–110; Dio 55.28). The trouble was that the German situation was similar to that on the eastern frontier: a highly dangerous enemy against whom public opinion demanded success, which meant victories and conquest. After

[28] R. Syme, *CAH*, 10.376.

Varus, however, Tiberius and Germanicus could achieve little.[29] The Rhine became the frontier again.

"The Alps from the region nearest the Adriatic Sea to the Tyrrhenian Sea I had pacified without committing wrongful aggression against any nation" (26.3). The pacification of the Alps removed a long-standing threat to northern Italian security. We do not know the general(s) concerned, but Pliny preserves the commemorative inscription, dated 7 BC (Plin., *Nat. His.* 3.136–137; Vell. 2.90).

"My fleet sailed through the ocean from the mouth of the Rhine eastwards almost to the lands of the Cimbri, which no Roman had approached by land or sea before that time, and the Cimbri, Charydes, Semnones and other German peoples of the same region sent ambassadors to seek a pact (*amicitia*) with me and the Roman people" (26.4). This is dated to AD 5 and is told by Tiberius' adulator rather differently: Tiberius led the army to the Elbe, and the fleet (commander unnamed) sailed up the coast and then up the Elbe to join the army (Vell. 2.106). Pliny accords more with the RG: a fleet sailed around Germany to the promontory of the Cimbri and reached Scythia and the "very moist" regions (2.167). It should be noted that Tiberius' brother Drusus was the first admiral to command in the North Sea in 12 BC (Tac., *Germ.* 34; Suet., *Claud.* 1). Some have preferred to refer the matter to this earlier case, seeing it as a very bold—but failed—attempt to find a link between the Ocean (as the Romans called it) and the Caspian (Strabo 2.5.14, 21; Virg., *Aen.* 6.794).[30] Neither Suetonius in his *Tiberius*, nor Dio (55.28) mentions Tiberius' naval exploit.

"At my orders and under my auspices there were led two armies at about the same time against Ethiopia and Arabia called Eudaimon, and large numbers of the enemy from either nation were killed in action and many towns captured … In Arabia the army marched into the land of the Sebaei as far as the town of Mariba" (26.5). For those who wish to understand how far Augustus could torture history this chapter is a capital example. To the contrary, the invasion of Arabia was a disaster (Strabo 16.4.22–24). The army under the prefect of Egypt, Aelius Gallus,

[29] D. Timpe's excellent articles underlie this reconstruction: "Zur Geschichte und Überlieferung der Okkupation Germaniens unter Augustus," *Saeculum* 18 (1967), 278–293; "Der römische Verzicht auf die Okkupation Germaniens," *Chiron* 1 (1971), 267–284; "Zur Geschichte der Rheingrenze zwischen Caesar und Drusus," in *Festschrift Erich Burck*, (Munich, 1983), 124–147.

[30] R. Dion, "Explication d'un passage des Res Gestae," *Mélanges Carcopino* (Paris, 1966), 249–270.

was lost in the desert and made an ignominious retreat. If the full story does not show Augustus being utterly dishonest, a sudden descent into vagueness from the man who delights in the most pedantic chronology catches the eye: "at about the same time." This also is a knowing attempt to deceive by in fact reversing the order of the two events: the Arabian fiasco (26–25 BC) caused an invasion of Egypt by the Ethiopians (24–22). This was successfully repulsed by Gallus' successor, C. Petronius (Dio 54.5). In sum, a disaster has been smuggled into Augustus' achievements in world conquest.[31]

"Egypt I added to the dominion of the Roman people" (27.1). There is probably no more important addition to the Roman Empire by Augustus than Egypt, but his account is of the briefest. It was the richest province, it was strategically vital (hence no senator was allowed to visit without the emperor's permission), and Augustus succeeded to the title and rights of the pharaohs and Ptolemies.

"Armenia Major I could have made a province" (27.2). There follows the rest of a substantial chapter on Rome's interventions in Armenia in an attempt to control it—which totally contradicts the opening assertion. Tiberius installed Tigranes III (20–6 BC): he was the natural nominee, but his coinage shows him to be pro-Parthian. He was succeeded by Tigranes IV (6–1 BC), when Rome supported his brother, Artavasdes. Augustus does admit that Armenia "revolted" (which is at the same time a claim to Roman control); others tell of a Roman "disaster" (Tac., *Ann.* 2.4.1). Augustus then jumps to the death of Tigranes and the installation of Ariobarzanes (1 BC–AD 4) by Gaius Caesar, who was killed during the fighting (Dio 55.10–10a). The pro-Roman Artavasdes (AD 4–10/12) was also killed, and Augustus finally installed Tigranes V; the agent is unspecified (perhaps a local governor) and Augustus implies that all ended well—but he was soon expelled (and presumably took refuge in Rome, where he was executed for treason in 36 [Tac., *Ann.* 6.40]!). This turbulent history is enough to show that Augustus' dreams of a province were fantasy; not even a client kingdom could be maintained. The reality is that his policy consisted of failure after failure, of fitful intervention in tangled dynastic politics unable to compete with Parthian influence, and at the end of his reign Armenia had been lost. Faraway Rome considered only its own interests and had no detailed knowledge

[31] S. Jameson, "The Chronology of the Campaigns of Aelius Gallus and C. Petronius," *JRS* 58 (1968), 71–84.

of local conditions other than what hopeful pretenders peddled. Yet Augustus depicts this as masterly control.

"All the provinces across the Adriatic eastwards, and the Cyrenes, when they were for the most part in the hands of kings … were recovered by me" (27.3). Augustus refers, in fact, to the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire, which were allotted to Antony on the division of the empire agreed to by Octavian at the Treaty of Brundisium in September 40 BC (App., *BC* 5.64–66). They were "recovered" by Antony's defeat in 31. That they were mostly in the hands of kings refers to two categories: the client kingdoms and the so-called "Donations of Alexandria." In both cases the statements are deceitful. Regarding the former, the four most important client kings established by Antony were maintained by Augustus: Polemo of Pontos, Amyntas of Galatia, Archelaus of Cappadocia, and Herod of Judea. The latter is the more emotional category: the claim that Antony "gave away" Roman territory—and that to Cleopatra and her family. The "donations" were in two phases: 37 and 34 BC In 37, Cleopatra was given most importantly Phoenicia, Coele-Syria, Cyprus, part of Cilicia, part of Judea, Crete, and Arabia (Plut., *Ant.* 36; Dio 49.32). This was to enable her to rebuild the Egyptian fleet, since Octavian had powerful naval forces in the West. Parts of these territories at least were traditionally Ptolemaic possessions. The second donation was much more spectacular, a grand public event. Associated with Cleopatra as queen of Egypt, Cyprus, Libya, and Coele-Syria was her son by Caesar, Caesarion; of her children by Antony, Alexander received Media and Parthia in anticipation of its conquest (!); Ptolemy received Phoenicia, Syria, and Cilicia (Plut., *Ant.* 54). Syria, in fact, was still under a Roman governor (App., *BC* 4.38), and Cyrene and Armenia were still occupied by Roman armies (Plut., *Ant.* 56.1, 69.3). The damage done to Antony by Octavian's propaganda, however, was equaled only by the "disclosure" of Antony's will in 32.

"The nations of Pannonia, never approached by Roman armies before my ascendancy (*ante me principem*), after being overthrown through the agency of Ti. Nero, who was then my stepson and legate, I subjected to the dominion of the Roman people and extended the boundaries of Illyricum to the bank of the river Danube" (30.1). Augustus refers to the campaigns of 12–9 BC (note Tiberius' status: my stepson), but the real subjugation of the province and the extension to the Danube took place following the great revolt (6–9), when Tiberius was his adopted son. And whereas the earlier campaign earned him only an *ovatio* (Dio 55.2.4), the later one was awarded a double triumph (*Inscr. Ital.* 13.2.134).

And what of earlier campaigns in this region? Crassus' campaigns against the Bastarnae and Dacians 29–28 BC earned him a triumph—but not the *spolia opima* (Dio 51.23 ff.). By far the more extraordinary omission is Octavian's own campaigns, 35–34 (App., *Ill.* 15–28; Dio 49.36–37), which he treated at length in his autobiography (App., *Ill.*15). There is, in fact, an allusion in the RG (20.1: "standards were recovered in Dalmatia"). It is unlikely that Augustus' account and evaluation were as unflattering as those of moderns.[32] It is generally agreed that the aim was to exercise his army and to be seen as active in contrast to Antony's poor showing in the East; if modest victories and territories were gained, so much the better. There is, in fact, more. Scipio Asiagenus was near the Danube circa 88 (App., *Ill.* 5), and Scribonius Curio reached it in 75 (Eutrop. 6.2.2)—the first Roman general to do so.

"When this river (the Danube) was crossed by an army of Dacians, it was defeated and overwhelmed under my auspices and later my army was led across the Danube and compelled the nations of Dacia to bear the rule of the Roman people" (30.2). For the repulse of the Dacians, no date or general is given. Candidates are Vinicius (*ILS* 8965) or Lentulus as legate of Illyricum (Tac., *Ann.* 4.44). The Dacians are known to have crossed the frozen Danube in 10 BC (Dio 54.36). The claims that the Dacians were conquered are fantasy.

So much for military campaigns. Between the eastern chapter and the Danubian intervenes a special topic: recovery of standards. "A number of military standards lost under other commanders I have recovered by defeating the enemy, in Spain, Gaul and Dalmatia" (29.1). One could not expect the defeated generals to be named, but one might have expected something more definite than "a number" (*complura*). The only easy case is the last: the standards lost in Dalmatia by Gabinius in 48 BC and Vatinius in 44 were recovered by Octavian in 35/4 (App., *Ill.* 28). We do not know who lost standards in Spain, only that coins from 25–23 show a kneeling Spaniard returning an eagle (*RIC* 1^2 41 no. 6). The standards in Gaul may have been lost by Sabinus in 54 (Caes. *BG* 5.37) and recovered by Agrippa in 37 (App., *BC* 5.92; Dio 48.49.2), although coins commemorate recovery in 12 BC (*RIC* 1^2 74 no. 416).

"The Parthians I compelled to restore the spoils and standards of three Roman armies and as suppliants to seek a pact (*amicitia*) with the Roman people" (29.2). This is one of the earliest lies detected in the

[32] R. Syme, *CAH*, 10.355; W. Schmitthenner, "Octavians militärische Unternehmungen in den Jahren 35–33," *Historia* 7 (1958), 189–236.

RG. None other than Edward Gibbon in 1776 wrote of "an honourable treaty" instead of compulsion. The culprits were Crassus in 55, Decidius Saxa in 40, and Oppius Statianus in 36 BC, but the last two being legates of Antony, he was held accountable (Liv., *Epit.* 141)—although he, in fact, recovered standards (Dio 49.44)! While the contemporary poets and coinage celebrated the "recovered standards" and showed the Parthians on their knees, historians offered sobering details. In Rome was Tiridates, a pretender to the Parthian throne, as well as a son of king Phraates. The senate in 23 BC recommended that Augustus keep Tiridates but restore the son (Dio 53.33). In other words, Roman policy at this time was extremely conciliatory! Phraates showed no haste: it was only three years later that he fulfilled his end of the bargain by returning the standards. Augustus behaved as if he had won a military victory (Dio 54.8). It is remarkable, however, that there is one contemporary source more important than all the others: the Prima Porta statue. Augustus' breastplate shows the handing over—and far from being on his knees, the Parthian is standing. And who gained more from the agreement? Rome recovered the standards, but Phraates recovered his son. Rome apparently also agreed that the pretender Tiridates would not be supported. Augustus admits that hostilities ceased (*amicitia*): this may well have been based on recognition of the Euphrates as the border.[33]

Also inserted in the middle of the military glories is a chapter listing colonies of veteran soldiers settled in Africa, Sicily, Macedonia, both Spains, Achaia, Asia, Syria, Narbonese Gaul and Pisidia, as well as twenty-eight colonies founded on his authority in Italy and flourishing (28). Scattered throughout the rest of the RG are other references to the veterans. One hundred twenty thousand each received 1,000 HS from booty in 29 BC (with his triumphs) (15.3). Military colonies, settling the veterans on the land, were Augustus' first—and the traditional—solution to the problem that had haunted the Republic. Augustus boasts that in 30 and 14 BC he paid 600 million in Italy, and 260 million in the provinces for this land. By 7 BC, however, he was paying pensions, and this continued for six years, requiring another 400 million (16). The third solution, in AD 6, was the establishment of a military pension fund (*aerarium militare*), which Augustus inaugurated with a gift of 170 million (17.2). He

[33] E. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, ed. J. Bury (London, 1895), 1.2; D. Bivar, *Cambridge History of Iran*, 3 (1983), 2.66–67; A.N. Sherwin White, *Roman Foreign Policy in the East 168 BC–AD 1* (Norman, 1984), 323.

neglected to say that it was henceforth reliant on public taxation. These scattered references illustrate beyond a doubt the crucial importance to the regime of the armies also after their years of service.

Three references are more important than all the above in summarizing the place of Augustus' military achievement in the RG. "Of all the provinces of the Roman people which had as neighbours nations not subject to our dominions I extended the borders" (26.1). This is the Princeps' proudest boast in all his military history—but it is not true. He added most to the extension of the Roman frontiers in the area of the Danube, a huge swath of territory all along the river. The Rhine essentially remained the frontier as before. In Africa, the only addition was Mauretania; by his own account Egypt was not a province (27.1). And in the East the only two new provinces were Galatia and Judea, with Armenia occasionally a client kingdom.[34]

"The Quirinus Gate … the senate resolved should be shut three times during my ascendancy [*me principe*]" (13). In comparison with the detailed dating in other chapters, here again it is tallying which is important, the contrast between three closures of this gateway in Augustus' regime and only two in the whole Republic. The crucial point of the chapter, however, is clear: here is Augustus' own account of the other side of the military successes he has detailed: the *pax Augusta*. The closing of the Janus Gate symbolized peace throughout the empire. The missing dates tell another story. They are, in fact, 29 BC (E&J 45), 25 BC (Dio 53.26), while the third occasion has been the object of endless debate,[35] because Augustus' exact words have not been noted: the senate voted that the gate should be closed. Dio records exactly such a case in 10 BC (54.36.12), but resumption of war prevented the vote being carried out. Sophistic language has been used to allow Augustus to claim yet another record. Here we have one of the most celebrated deceits of the regime: that it was an era of unprecedented peace. Close attention to the RG exposes this: two chapters on peace (12–13) and at least five on war (25–27, 29–30). And the two closures of Janus occurred in the earliest years of the forty-year Principate. That Augustus himself has so little to say about peace is more revealing than he realized. The other reference to peace is the dedication of the Ara Pacis (12.2). This has assumed more importance for moderns than it had in its own day because of its spectacular recovery from under the palazzo Fiano.

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[34] H. Braunert, "Omnium provinciarum … fines auxi," *Chiron* 7 (1977), 207–217.
[35] Ridley, *The Emperor's Retrospect*, 114.

"Roman citizens serving under oath to me have numbered about half a million. Of these I settled in colonies or returned to their towns on earning their discharge rather more than 300,000, and to all of them I allotted land or granted money as the reward of their services" (3.3). Here is the key of keys to the Augustan military history and the regime. It was a military monarchy. The soldiers took their oath to Augustus while in service. They relied on him for everything after service. And a simple subtraction shows the costs of the "Augustan peace": twenty-five legions (about one hundred twenty-five thousand men) were still in service. Seventy-five thousand men (the equivalent of fifteen legions) did not make it to retirement.

Diplomatic History

> There were frequently sent to me from India royal embassies which had not been seen before that time with any Roman leader (*dux*). A pact (*amicitia*) with us was sought through ambassadors by the Bastarnae, the Scythians, the kings of the Sarmatians from the nearer and the farther sides of the river Don, and by the king of the Albani, of the Hiberi and of the Medes.
>
> There fled to me as suppliants the kings of the Parthians Tiridates and later Phraates the son of King Phraates, Artavasdes king of the Medes, Artaxares king of the Adiabeni, Dumnobellaunus and Tincommius kings of the Britons, Maelo king of the Sugambri, and [. . .]rus king of the Marcomanni Suebi. To me in Italy Phraates, king of the Parthians, son of Orodes, sent all his sons and grandsons, not after a military defeat, but seeking a pact (*amicitia*) with us on the security of his children. Very many other nations put the Roman people's trust to the test under my ascendancy (*me principe*), although previously there had existed no diplomatic or treaty relations with the Roman people.
>
> From my hand the nations of Parthia and Media received the kings they sought through ambassadors who were the leaders (*principes*) of their nation, the Parthians Vonones son of King Phraates grandson of King Orodes, the Medes Ariobarzanes son of King Artavazdes grandson of King Ariobarzanes. (31–33)

These chapters are not the least important in the RG. The diplomatic history of Rome during the Augustan regime is the real symbol of the power and reputation of Rome, or rather, its ruler. Envoys come to him from everywhere, as far away as India. So many kings take refuge with *him*, and from *his hand* kings are received. Dominating all, however, is the tallying mentality, with no context or explanation.

Of the refugee kings, it could be assumed that they expected that Augustus, who wished to stress the respect of the whole world for him, would have used his influence to restore them to power. Of the half-dozen identifiable kings, in fact only one, Artavasdes of Media, was reestablished, in Armenia (Dio 54.9.2). The most interesting kingdom in this category is Britain, given Caesar's double invasion and the strident appeals for conquest by contemporary poets (Virg., *Georg.* 3.25; Hor., *Od.* 1.21.13–16, 1.35.29–30, 3.4.33, 3.5.2–3., 4.14.47; Prop. 2.27.5, 4.3.9) and plans for conquest detailed by Dio in 27 and 25 BC (53.22.5, 25.2). The timid and reputedly incompetent Claudius would grasp the nettle.

Of the two installed kings, Ariobarzanes of Media c. 20 BC raises a fundamental question. He is the son of Artavasdes (33). Earlier there appears Ariobarzanes, son of Artabanus, king of Armenia c. AD 2 (27.2). The fathers' names are in fact variants: the sons are apparently one and the same—a fact of which Augustus seems blissfully unaware.

Perhaps the most amazing item of all in these three chapters is the reference to Phraates sending all his sons and grandsons as hostages for an alliance (32.2). Contemporary texts made the most of this: the Parthians "slavishly" sought the alliance (Strabo 6.4.2); they were in awe of Tiberius (Vell. 2.94). The truth was that Phraates was in love with an Italian concubine, Thesmusa, and she induced the king to send his legitimate sons as hostages to Rome, so that her children would have precedence (Jos. *AJ* 18.39–42); Phraates was more in fear of his subjects' disloyalty than of Rome, suggested Tacitus (*Ann.* 2.1). The date is thought to be 10 BC, and Livy, in fact, mentions peace at that time (*Per.* 141). Nothing like all his children, let alone his grandchildren, were handed over to Rome. What makes Augustus' statement outrageous, however, is the claim that Phraates had not suffered a military defeat: that was never to be achieved under Augustus' regime; in fact, Augustus himself had only a few chapters earlier (29.2) referred to the loss of standards to the Parthians by no fewer than three Roman armies![36]

There is, strange to say, another diplomatic engagement with Parthia that Augustus omits. Phraates was murdered by his bastard son of the same name in 2 BC Gaius Caesar was sent to the East; Rome demanded that Parthia cease interfering in Armenia (!) while the new king demanded the return of his brothers. It was the young king who made concessions. He kept out of Armenia and relinquished his siblings, but the

[36] M. Pani, *Roma ed i re d'Oriente*, (Bari, 1972), 26–30.

Romans were not to intervene in Armenia either (Vell. 2.101). Here was yet another pact with Parthia, necessitated by the accession of a new king. This was the definitive arrangement, which lasted until Trajan tore up all pacts—but it is unrecorded in the RG.

Conclusion

"I myself left standards in many matters for the imitation of posterity" (8.5). In a sense, this is Augustus' summation of his position, the reason he wished to leave the record of the RG, but it is studiously vague. Was it his own conduct that was worthy of imitation? Was it his policies that set the standards? Or was he pointing to standards set in the past (that would be very Roman)? The problem is compounded by the text, because the Greek translation says that Augustus left *himself* as the exemplar (the first interpretation above), and parallel texts support this (Ovid, *Met*. 15.834), not to mention the famous Augustan shield with his four virtues. We know, on the other hand, that he supported his policies by reference to the past (Suet., *Aug*. 89), such as Metellus on families, but most strikingly the series of heroes in the Augustan Forum. On the other hand, his moral legislation easily comes to mind (Suet., *Aug*. 34), and the emphasis on military training for the younger generation led by his own grandsons (RG 14.2), the reform of the senate (Dio 54.14), or social policies such as on citizen dress (Suet., *Aug*. 40.5), perhaps even the stress on his own traditionalism (RG 5–6).

Mommsen notoriously complained that the RG reveals no secrets of rule (*arcana imperii*). To the contrary, there for all to see are the "secrets" of Augustus' power—as if any contemporary were not aware of them: total control of the legions—both in service and on retirement[37]—and of the Roman plebs (fed, entertained, and reassured); wealth past all counting; and a propaganda machine to ensure that no message went unheeded, skills he had learned in the time of the triumvirate.[38]

When all is said and done, what is most apparent is that, unlike most other people who leave to others the final verdict on their lives and deeds, Augustus was taking no chances. *He* would control the historical record and shape history's verdict. His plan almost failed. The RG disappeared

[37] R. Ridley, "A Rational Yet Fanatical Loyalty: Augustus and the Legions," *Antichthon* 39 (2005), 48–76.

[38] K. Scott, "The Political Propaganda of 44–30 BC," *MAAR* 11 (1933), 7–49.

from sight for about a millennium after the looting of Rome by the various barbarians, and the only copies survived in far-flung provinces where perhaps only an overzealous governor had been responsible for copying a text meant only for Roman eyes. Then since the sixteenth century, scholars from all over the world have labored to recover Augustus' text and to understand it, most of them still under the spell of his reputation. Augustus could not have wished for more.

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1. For ease of comprehension by the widest readership, all passages of the *Res Gestae* have been translated following the version of E.A. Judge (n. 16), based on the edition of Hans Volkmann, *Res Gestae divi Augusti*, 3rd ed. Berlin 1969. Latinists who need the original will consult the editions listed below.

2. There have been four fundamental editions:

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Cooley, A.E. *Res Gestae Divi Augusti: Text, Translation, and Commentary*. Cambridge, 2009.

All four are accompanied by comprehensive commentaries.

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CHAPTER NINE

THE EARLY EMPIRE

Pere Villalba Varneda*

Concerning writings of an autobiographical nature, the custom of the last period of the Republic persists during the first century of the Common Era: emperors and *uiri militares*, as well as a number of aristocratic women, write their memoirs. They constitute a historical corpus of great interest, even if the results of the research are a little disappointing, due to the scarcity of surviving materials. This "original material" included *commentarii* by magistrates, by military men, as well as archives from the great families—family memoirs, forensic reports, *laudationes*, political addresses of an apologetic kind and works of a similar nature, voyages, epistolography, poetry, and even epigraphic writings—not all of which has ever been published or detected by historians, although as it seems it has been available for consultation.[1]

From the first century, only the *Vita Flauii Iosephi* has come down to us; the existence of the rest of memoirs of which we have knowledge is deduced from multiple references in the works of a number of authors.[2]

* I wish to thank Dr. Antoni Tobella-Vergés for having translated this article from Catalan into English, and Drs. Terry J. Walsh and Jorge Uscatescu-Barrón for their revisions of the final text and useful suggestions.

[1] On the *Acta Vrbis* and the *Acta senatus* and imperial archives, see Luc de Conink, "Les sources documentaires de Suétone, 'Les XII Césars,' 1900–1990," *ANRW* 2.33.5 (Berlin, 1991), 3675–3700. For a documented analysis of the problem, see R.G. Lewis, "Imperial Autobiography: Augustus to Hadrian," *ANRW* 2.34.1 (Berlin, 1993), 629–706. See Henry H. Armstrong, *Autobiographic Elements in Latin Inscriptions* (Humanistic Series) 3.4 (University of Michigan Studies, 1910), 215–286; J. Gómez Pallarès, "Autobiography as Meta-Literature: Epigraphy and Literature, from Ancient to Medieval Latin Times," *Veleia* 18–19 (2001–2002), 399–415.

[2] E. Bickel, Historia de la literatura romana, (Madrid, 1982), chapters XVII and XIX.

I. Personal Memoirs

1. *Tiberivs Clavdivs Nero (42 BC–AD 37)*

Tiberius appreciated Greek and Latin literature, had been trained in rhetoric,[3] had learned the art of poetry and imitated his predecessors by drawing up a summary[4] of his life: *Etsi commentario, quem de uita sua summatim breuiterque composuit, ausus est scribere Seianum se punisse, quod comperisset furere aduersus liberos Germanici filii sui; quorum ipse alterum suspecto iam, alterum oppresso demum Seiano interemit*.[5]

By *commentario* we must understand Tiberius' wish to present a work similar to Augustus' *Res gestae*, which is no more than an enumeration of deeds.[6] Suetonius in his *De uita Caesarum* (c. 121) devotes a biography to emperor Domitian. In it he asserts by way of criticism that *praeter commentarios et acta Tiberii Caesaris nihil lectitabat* (ch. 20),[7] by which it is possible to understand that *commentarii et acta* included especially Tiberius' military successes.[8]

2. *C. Caesar (Caligula) (Emperor AD 37–41)*

Caligula ordered the suppression of the memoirs or declarations of the trial of his family. For this reason it is worth recording here: *commentarios ad matris fratrumque suorum causas pertinentis, ne cui postmodum delatori aut testi maneret ullus metus, conuectos in forum, et ante clare obtestatus deos neque legisse neque attigisse quicquam, concremauit; libellum de salute sua oblatum non recepit, contendens nihil sibi admissum cur cuiquam inuisus esset, negauitque se delatoribus aures habere*.[9]

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[3] Suet., *Tib*. 70.1.

[4] M. Schanz and C. Hosius, *Geschichte der römischen Literatur*, *Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft*, 2 (Munich, 1967[2]), 421.

[5] Suet., *Tib*. 61.2.

[6] H. Peter, *HRR*, 2:CXVIIII.

[7] For the existence of the *commentarii* as personal archives of the emperors, see Tac., *Ann*. 13.43: *compertum sibi referens [Nero] ex commentariis patris sui [Claudii] nullam cuiusquam accusationem ab eo coactam*; *Hist*. 4.40: *petit a Caesare ⟨Domitiano⟩ Iunius Mauricus ut commentariorum principalium potestatem senatui faceret, per quos nosceret quem quisque accusandum poposcisset. Consulendum tali super re principem respondit*.

[8] See Lewis, "Imperial Autobiography," 692–694.

[9] Suet., *Calig*., 15.6.

3. *Tiberivs Clavdivs (Emperor AD 41–54)*

The emperor Claudius' training in the liberal arts was extensive, and his contribution to history well acknowledged.[10] As for the preservation of some political memoirs, we should quote the testimony of Suetonius, according to whom Claudius' mother (Antonia) and grandmother (Octavia)[11] preserved, at least *in mente*, the memoirs of the family: *Initium autem sumpsit historiae post caedem Caesaris dictatoris, sed et transiit ad inferiora tempora coepitque a pace ciuili, cum sentiret neque libere neque uere sibi de superioribus tradendi potestatem relictam, correptus saepe et a matre et ab auia* (*Claud.* 41.4).

In AD 44 Claudius began to write an autobiography in eight books, which is not extant. It comprised legal and political deeds and personal memoirs[12] according to a standardized chronological order of attractive, if uneven, reading; its appraisal also comes from Suetonius: *composuit et de uita sua octo uolumina, magis inepte quam ineleganter* (*Claud.* 41.5). Suetonius even remarks on the fact that Claudius should complain about the tutor he had had as a child with the expression *ipse quodam libello conqueritur* (*Claud.* 2.4), where this *libello* could be taken to mean a part of his autobiographic memoirs.[13]

4. *Women of the First Century*

Political life in first century AD is also marked by the presence of three women who exerted some influence, and from a position of power, vis-à-vis respective emperors.

4.1. *Agrippina the Elder (14 BC–AD 29)*

Agrippina took part in Roman political life by the side of Germanicus (they married in AD 5); in addition, she was a lady who embodied the virtues of the Roman matron.[14] Nevertheless, after the death of her husband, Agrippina had to fight to preserve her position within the imperial family.

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[10] Jos., *Ant.* 19.213; Suet., *Claud.* 3 and 41–42.

[11] Peter, *HRR*, 2:CXXI.

[12] E. Huzar, "Claudius—the Erudite Emperor," *ANRW* 2.32.1 (Berlin, 1984), 611–650; Lewis, "Imperial Autobiography," 695–697.

[13] H. Bardon, *Les Empéreurs et les Lettres Latines d'Aguste à Hadrien* (Paris, 1968^2), 129.

[14] D. Tudor, *Donne celebri del mondo antico*, Italian ed. (Milan, 1980–1985), 245 ff.

After Germanicus' significant victories over the German peoples of the Rhine, the emperor Tiberius asked him to restore order in Armenia, together with the senator Gnaeus Piso and his wife Plancina, both being the emperor's confidants. It was AD 18. In the following year, Germanicus suddenly fell ill and advised his wife from his deathbed not to anger those in power at Rome (Tac., *Ann*. 2.72). Agrippina returned to Rome taking her children and the ashes of her husband with her (Tac., *Ann*. 2.75).

Tiberius withdrew to the isle of Capri, and his lieutenant Sejanus became the master of Rome. Drusus, son of Tiberius, died in AD 23, and a son of Agrippina, Gaius Julius Caesar (the future Caligula), had the chance to obtain the throne. Nevertheless, Sejanus attempted to become heir by asking for the hand of Livilla, Drusus' widow, but the emperor did not grant it. In the year 26, Agrippina presented herself before the emperor at Capri to ask him for permission to marry; Tiberius did not reply (Tac., *Ann*. 4.53).

However, the end was near for Agrippina: charged by the Senate with conspiring against the emperor in the year 29, she had to endure exile on the island of Pandataria (Suet., *Tib*. 53). Her son Gaius Julius Caesar succeeded Tiberius—the dream of Agrippina come true.

It is possible that Agrippina the Elder may have left some written memoirs of her tragic life if we are to interpret from a literary perspective the scroll she carries in her hand in the cameo preserved in Paris, in which she appears standing next to Germanicus.[15]

4.2. *Valeria Messalina (c. 25–48)*

After the murder of Caligula (24 January 41), the praetorians proclaimed Claudius as emperor. He was recognized by the Senate and the people, and by the army.

At 50, Claudius married Valeria Messalina (c. 39/40), who was not given the title of *Augusta*;[16] yet she caused so many scandals that she furnished a veritable corpus of memoirs in only eight years. Messalina, therefore, despite occupying the presidency of the Vestals in 43 (Dio, *Hist. Rom*. 60.22.2), was an effective *casus* of corruption among Roman high society (Dio, *Hist. Rom*. 60.18); Pliny (*Nat. His*. 10.172) and Juvenal (*Sat*. 6.115–132) and would be answerable for a number of deaths: in 42, C. Appius Junius Silanus, her mother's husband (Dio, *Hist. Rom*. 60.14.3); in 43, Julia, Drusus' daughter (Suet., *Claud*. 19; Dio, *Hist. Rom*. 60.18.4);

[15] Bickel, *Historia de la literatura romana*, 438.
[16] Dio, *Hist. Rom*. 60.12.5.

Catonius Justus (Dio, *Hist. Rom*. 60.18.3); in 46, M. Vinicius (Dio, *Hist. Rom*. 60.27.4); and in 47, Valerius Asiaticus (Tac., *Ann*. 11.1–3).

The purported book of memoirs of Messalina was partially collected by Tacitus, who devotes thirteen chapters to details of the relations of the empress with the young patrician Gaius Silius, the embarrassing scandal that led her to her death in 48. The testimony of Tacitus carries some political weight, as the empress had been seeking an objective of huge importance, namely to obtain the imperial throne for Silius, thus breaking the succession line of the Julio-Claudian dynasty.[17]

4.3. *Julia Agrippina the Younger (15–59)*

The successor of Messalina at the court was Julia Agrippina, daughter of Agrippina the Elder. She was the mother of Nero (Jos., *Ant*. 20.149) and a niece of Claudius. She married Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus, nephew of Augustus, with whom she conceived emperor Nero in 37. At the death of her husband, she inherited a considerable fortune.

After having had her goods confiscated and been sent into exile, first by Caligula and again in the year 39 by Messalina, Agrippina was later rehabilitated by Claudius. In 44 she married G. Sallustius Crispus Passienus (Plin., *Nat. His*. 16.242), and at her husband's death (c. 48), she married the emperor Claudius, her uncle (in 49; Tac., *Ann*. 12.1 ff.). Tacitus views the union of emperor Claudius and his niece Agrippina from a political standpoint when assessing the maneuvers of the freedman Pallas—who was keen on the union (Tac., *Ann*. 12.3). In the year 50 Agrippina received the title of *Augusta* (*CIL* VI 921).

Agrippina wrote her own memoirs, in a personal tone, in which she narrated the vicissitudes of her family; these were completed (published?) after the year 55,[18] when she was relegated from public life: *id ego, a scriptoribus annalium non traditum, repperi in commentariis Agrippinae filiae, quae, Neronis principis mater, uitam suam et casus suorum posteris memorauit* (*Ann*. 4.53). We understand that the *commentariis* … the *uitam suam et casus* constituted memoirs justifying the author's actions and the situation of her family, while recording the enmity felt by Tiberius toward Agrippina the Elder[19] and the dangers under Claudius and Nero.

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[17] See K.G. Wallace, "Women in Tacitus 1903–1986," *ANRW* 2.33.5 (Berlin, 1991), 3556–3574.

[18] See Lewis, "Imperial Autobiography," 652–658 (who points out the difficulties involved in reconstructing Agrippina's memoirs).

[19] Bickel, *Historia de la literatura romana*, 438; Peter, *HRR*, 2:CXXIII; Lewis, "Imperial Autobiography," 654.

There is no doubt that Tacitus uses the memoirs of Agrippina in books 12–14 of his *Annals*. The Elder Pliny, in turn, offers his testimony along the same lines: *Neronem quoque paulo ante principem et toto principatu suo hostem generis humani pedibus genitum scribit parens eius Agrippina*.[20]

Tacitus used Pliny as his source for the German wars, which the latter had described in twenty books, and concerning Agrippina he wrote:

> *Peruaserat interim circumuenti exercitus fama et infesto Germanorum agmine Gallias peti, ac ni Agrippina inpositum Rheno pontem solvi prohibuisset, erant qui id flagitium formidine auderent. Sed femina ingens animi munia ducis per eos dies induit, militibusque, ut quis inops aut saucius, uestem et fomenta dilargita est. Tradit C. Plinius, Germanicorum bellorum scriptor, stetisse apud principium pontis laudes et grates reuersis legionibus habentem.* (*Ann*. 1.69)

Flavius Josephus, on the other hand, summarizes the machinations of Agrippina and the poisoning of Claudius—then he points out her noble descent and her marriage to Ahenobarbus—and the scheme to place her son Nero at the head of the empire, for which she had plotted the death of the emperor ("it was reported by some / according to report;" *Ant*. 20.148–149 and 151; Tac., *Ann*. 12.66 and 67: *ut temporum … scriptores prodiderint*). This identical Flavian observation could point not only to material of oral tradition, but also, and above all, to a collection of references handed down by a number of writers, as mentioned by Tacitus.

In the end, it would be Nero himself who would bring about the death of his mother Agrippina (in 59), and Josephus denounces the crime with a thesis of an intellectual nature based on gratitude—an element integrated into the virtue of justice. Thus Nero was committing the greatest of injustices, not due to the moral baseness of the crime itself, but rather because of a lack of proper resonance with the two great gifts bestowed on him by Agrippina—his life and the empire—the latter obtained also through criminal means: "Not long afterwards Nero openly murdered his own mother. This was the compensation that he paid her not only for giving birth to him but also for having obtained for him, through her devices, the Roman imperial throne" (*Ant*. 20.153).[21]

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[20] Plin., *Nat. His*. 7.46.

[21] See Tac., *Ann*. 14.1–13. Among other women whose lives could be the matter of an autobiography is Poppaea Sabina (30/32–65), Nero's lover and wife, who filled the public scene with calumnies and crimes. Her most relevant quality was her physical beauty

II. Memoirs / Reports

1. *Cn. Domitivs Corbvlo*

Corbulo was one of the leading generals of his time: suffect consul (c. 45) and from 46 commander of the army in Germania Inferior; he was appointed by Nero in 54 general of the army during the Armenian-Parthian crisis, which he dealt with in the years 55–63.

Corbulo was the first author of some military memoirs in the first century, this being the first discursive memoir after a long period of silence. It seems that his written work was considered to be indiscreet, and Nero decided to put him to death in 67.[22]

Tacitus assesses Corbulo's writings, *uerbis magnificis et super experientiam sapientiamque etiam specie inanium ualidus* (*Ann*. 13.8) without specifying whether this *experientia* also included the actions carried out by the general in Germania.[23] Be that as it may, it can be accepted that Corbulo's "military memoirs" concerning his activity in Armenia were used by Tacitus—with due precaution—in books 13 (8–9, 34–41), 14 (23–26) and 15 (1–17, 24–31) of the latter's *Annals*. Here is an example of this:

> *Ceterum obsessis adeo suppeditauisse rem frumentariam constitit, ut horreis ignem inicerent, contraque prodiderit Corbulo Parthos inopes copiarum et pabulo attrito relicturos oppugnationem, neque se plus tridui itinere afuisse. Adicit iure iurando Paeti cautum apud signa, adstantibus iis, quos testificando rex misisset, neminem Romanum Armeniam ingressurum, donec referrentur litterae Neronis, an paci adnueret. Quae ut augendae infamiae composita, sic reliqua non in obscuro habentur, una die quadraginta milium spatium emensum esse Paetum, desertis passim sauciis, neque minus deformem illam fugientium trepidationem, quam si terga in acie vertissent. Corbulo cum suis copiis apud ripam Euphratis obvius non eam speciem insignium et armorum praetulit, ut diuersitatem exprobraret: maesti manipuli ac uicem commilitonum miserantes ne lacrimis quidem temperare; uix prae fletu usurpata consalutatio. Decesserat certamen uirtutis et ambitio gloriae, felicium hominum adfectus: sola misericordia ualebat, et apud minores magis.*[24]

(Plin., *Nat. His*. 11.238, 28.183), which she would use to obtain what she wanted. The main source that perpetuates extensively Poppaea's memory is Tacitus (*Ann*. 13–16) with some direct contributions by Flavius Josephus (*Ant*. 20.195; *Vita* 16).

[22] Peter, *HRR*, 2:CXXXII–CXXXVIII; G. Misch, *Autobiography*, 1:255–256.

[23] See *Ann*. 11.18 and 19: *datis obsidibus consedit apud agros a Corbulone descriptos: idem senatum, magistratus, leges imposuit. ac ne iussa exuerent praesidium immuniuit*.

[24] *Ann*. 15.16.

The same can be said of Cassius Dio (*Hist. Rom*. 62.19–23) regarding the fact that Corbulo was his historical source, as well as Pliny, who seems to have fought under Corbulo in Germany (in 47), this acquaintance being his leading geographical and ethnographical source for Armenia and the area of the Euphrates (*Nat. His*. 2.180, 5.83, 6.23 and 40).[25]

2. *L. Antistivs Vetvs*

During his time as consul, Antistius was active in Germania Superior (55–56); he was proconsul of Asia (63–64) until Nero condemned him (65). Pliny mentions an L. Antistius Vetus in his geographical books (*Nat. His*. 3–6) together with Hyginius, Mela, and Corbulo. Antistius apparently conceived a grandiose project, if we are to believe Tacitus: *Vetus Mosellam atque [Ararim] facta inter utrumque fossa conectere parabat, ut copiae per mare, dein Rhodano et Arare subuectae per eam fossam, mox fluuio Mosella in Rhenum, exim Oceanum decurrerent, sublatisque itineris difficultatibus nauigabilia inter se Occidentis Septentrionisque litora fierent. Inuidit operi Aelius Gracilis Belgicae legatus, deterrendo Veterem*.[26] All of this allows us to accept that Antistius wrote memoirs of the activity and projects he carried out in Germania.[27]

3. *Svetonivs Pavlinvs*

Suetonius, the father of the biographer of the emperors, is the author of a number of *commentarii* about the campaigns he fought in Mauritania (in 42) as *legatus legionis*; he probably composed these during the time of Vespasian, but they are not extant. He was consul in the year 66.

Pliny picks up the parts that interest him most for his encyclopedia, such as the geographical description and the ethnological details the author enjoyed so much, as he had been the first Roman to cross the Atlas mountains (*Nat. His*. 5.14–15).[28] Tacitus, too, must have used his memoirs (*Agricola* 14–16; *Ann*. 14.29–39; *Hist*. 2.32–33, 37, and 60).[29]

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[25] M. Schanz and C. Hosius, *Handbuch*, 652; Peter, *HRR*, 2 (fragments from Tacitus, Cassius Dio and Pliny), 99–101; Lewis, "Imperial Autobiography," 647–652.

[26] *Ann*. 13.53.

[27] Peter, *HRR*, 2:CXXXVIIII–CXXXX; M. Schanz and C. Hosius, *Handbuch*, 653.

[28] Misch, *Autobiography*, 1:256, with footnt.; M. Schanz and C. Hosius, *Handbuch*, 653; Peter, *HRR*, 2:CXXXVIII–CXXXVIIII.

[29] See Lewis, "Imperial Autobiography," 645–647.

4. *M. Vipstanvs Messala*

Vipstanus took part in the struggle for power (in 69) between Vespasian and Vitellius (Tac., *Hist*. 3.9.3 *legioni tribunus Vipstanus Messala praeerat, claris maioribus, egregius ipse et qui solus ad id bellum artis bonas attulisset*), which features in Tacitus' *Dialogus de oratoribus* (year 74; 14.15 ff.) and turns up in his *Historiae* as a point of reference: *rem nominaque auctore Vipstano Messala tradam* (3.25.2); *Hormini id ingenium, ut Messala tradit, an potior auctor sit C. Plinius, qui Antonium incusat, haud facile discreuerim* (3.28.1). Vipstanus, therefore, must have written his memoirs, with autobiographical elements, about the military campaign of autumn 69.[30]

5. *C. Licinivs Mvcianvs*

The emperor Claudius kept Mucianus away from Rome by sending him to Asia (Tac., *Hist*. 1.10), but in the time of Nero, he served as legate (in 55 and 60) under Corbulo in Armenia; he took part in the election of Vespasian (year 70) and held the office of consul on three occasions (the last in the year 72).

Pliny the Elder quotes Mucianus as one of his sources in Books 2–13, 16, 19, 33, 35, and 36, in particular concerning geographical, historical, and artistic data, as well as for his contributions to the field of natural sciences, all presented as some type of memoir of a journey in Asia.[31]

Mucianus also wrote reports and letters, which must have been true *commentarii*, as deduced from Tacitus' statement: *Nescio an uenerint in manus uestras haec uetera, quae et in antiquariorum bibliothecis adhuc manent et cum maxime a Muciano contrahuntur, ac iam undecim* [in 75], *ut opinor, Actorum libris et tribus Epistularum composita et edita sunt* (*Dial*. 37).

6. *Ti. Clavdivs Balbillvs*

Balbillus, prefect of Egypt in 55,[32] probably wrote about his Egyptian experiences in the form of *commentarii* that contained the marvels of the

[30] M. Schanz and C. Hosius, *Handbuch*, 653; Peter, *HRR*, 2:CLXVIII–CLXVIIII and 115–116; K.M. Coleman, "The Emperor Domitian and Literature," *ANRW* 2.32.5 (Berlin, 1986), 3107.

[31] M. Schanz and C. Hosius, *Handbuch*, 783–785 and 835; Peter, *HRR*, 2:CXXXX–CXXXXII and 101–107.

[32] Tac., *Ann*. 13.22.

Nile and the customs of the inhabitants.[33] Seneca bears witness to this: *Balbillus, uirorum optimus perfectusque in omni litterarum genere rarissime, auctor est, cum ipse praefectus obtineret Aegyptum, Heracleotico ostio Nili, quod est maximum, spectaculo sibi fuisse delphinorum a mari occurrentium et crocodillorum a flumine aduersum agmen agentium uelut pro partibus proelium; crocodillos ab animalibus placidis morsuque innoxiis uictos* (*Q. Nat.* 4.2.13).[34]

7. T. Flavivs Vespasianvs (Emperor 69–79)

The emperor Vespasian was an accomplished orator and favored poets and artists, but not philosophers or astrologists.[35] One has to admit that his education may have led him to write spontaneously or to dictate some *commentarii* about his campaigns, as a kind of "field notes." Such "notes," written in Latin, must have undergone a literary formatting later by way of an official report of campaign by imperial scribes.[36]

Flavius Josephus talks explicitly of Vespasian's *hypomnemata* (ὑπομνήματα) when counterattacking Justus of Tiberias, whose account about the hostilities in Judaea runs counter to the account contained in the actual war *commentarii* of the emperor, "which further relate how insistently the inhabitants of the Decapolis pressed Vespasian, when at Ptolemais, to punish you [Justus], as the culprit" (*Vita* 342).[37] In *Contra Apionem* (1.56), Flavius Josephus will recall the same reports, including too the writings of Titus: "even if, as they assert, they have read the *Commentaries* of the imperial commanders, they at any rate had no first-hand acquaintance with our position in the opposite camp."

It is possible to find in Tacitus (*Hist.* 5.6, 7, 13) vestiges of the *commentarii* of Vespasian, as it is in Pliny (*Nat. His.* 2.226, 5.71 ff., 7.65). The

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[33] M. Schanz and C. Hosius, *Handbuch*, 656, 835, 863.

[34] See Plin., *Nat. His.* 19.3; Peter, *HRR*, 2:CXXXXIII, 107–108.

[35] Suet., *Vesp.* 13, 18, 19, 23. See M. Schanz and C. Hosius, *Handbuch*, 430–433. See S. Franchet d'Espèrey, "Vespasian, Titus et la littérature," *ANRW* 2.32.5 (Berlin, 1986), 3048–3086.

[36] Josephus, *The Jewish War*, trans. H. ST.J. Thackeray, (The Loeb Classical Library) 2 vols. (London, 1967), xx–xxii; Peter, *HRR*, 2:CXXXXIII–CXXXXV, 108. These *commentarii* could have been published between 75 (year of the *Bellum*) and 79 (death of Vespasian), according to H. Bardon, *Les empéreurs et les lettres latines* (Paris, 1968^2), 271–272.

[37] Josephus used extensively the *commentarii [de bello iudaico]* by Vespasian and Titus: W. Weber, *Josephus und Vespasian* (Berlin, 1921); Lewis, "Imperial Autobiography," 640–645; J. Nicols, *Vespasian and the Partes Flavianae*, Historia Einzelschriften 28 (Wiesbaden, 1978), 44 ff.

commentarii could also contain elements of propaganda from the beginning of his reign—elements that Suetonius (*Vesp*. 5), Tacitus (*Hist*. 2.78), and Flavius Josephus (*Bellum* 3.400–402, 4.623) would also collect.

8. *T. Flavivs Vespasianvs (Emperor 79–81)*

Titus had received a good education and had acquired great knowledge,[38] as is clear from the testimony of Pliny, who dedicated to him his *Naturalis Historia*: *Fulgurare in nullo umquam verius dicta vis eloquentiae, tribunicia potestas facundiae. quanto tu ore patris laudes tonas* (5); *te quidem in excelsissimo generis humani fastigio positum, summa eloquentia, summa eruditione praeditum* (11). Suetonius too praises his excellent knowledge and skills:

> *Armorum et equitandi peritissimus, Latine Graeceque, uel in orando uel in fingentis poematibus, promptus et facilis ad extemporalitatem usque; sed ne musicae quidem rudis, ut qui cantaret et psalleret iucunde scienterque. E pluribus comperi, notis quoque excipere uelocissime solitum, cum amanuensibus suis per ludum iocumque certantem, imitarique chirographa quaecumque uidisset, ac saepe profiteri maximum falsarium esse potuisse.*
>
> (*Tit*. 3.2–3)

Within this cultural framework, Flavius Josephus attributes to the young emperor Titus the composition of some *hypomnemata* (ὑπομνήματα), when after having denounced the falsity of the history written by Justus of Tiberias, he affirms that the latter was neither present at the Jerusalem war nor knew with any degree of attention Caesar's (that is, Titus') *commentarii*, "nor had you perused the *Commentaries* of Caesar, as is abundantly proved by your contradictory account which conflicts with those *Commentaries*" (*Vita* 358). As we have seen in the previous section, Flavius Josephus, in *Contra Apionem* (1.56), repeats the same remark about Vespasian's and Titus' *commentarii* against the criticism of their opponents. Such *commentarii* would contain the most important and private data about the strategic plans for the Judean war, material of maximum historical interest, but Flavius Josephus, interestingly, does not quote it explicitly in his *Bellum Iudaicum*. Nevertheless, the careful and wide literary treatment allotted to Titus by Flavius Josephus in his *Bellum* might lead a reader to think that it was an imperial commission.[39]

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[38] M. Schanz and C. Hosius, *Handbuch*, 430–433.

[39] Franchet, "Vespasian," 3081–3082.

9. *T. Flavivs Domitianvs (Emperor 81–96)*

Even if Domitian has been the object of controversies concerning his literary capacity, he can be studied here thanks to four references to him. Firstly, Martial refers to an epic poem written by Domitian which suggests that he intervened in the siege of the Capitol in the year 69: *ad Capitolini caelestia carmina belli / grande cothurnati pone Maronis opus* (*Ep*. 5.5.7–8). This, therefore, would not just be a general reference, but proof of the existence of an epic poem with autobiographical aspects.

Valerius Flaccus, too, informs us that Domitian treated the Judean war: *Sancte pater, ueterumque faue ueneranda canenti / facta uirum: uersam proles tua pandit Idumen [= Judaea], / namque potest, Solymo nigrantem puluere fratrem / spargentemque faces et in omni turre furentem* (*Arg*. 1.11–14).

Quintilian refers to another possible poem containing possible autobiographical traits:

> *Hos nominamus quia Germanicum Augustum ab institutis studiis deflexit cura terrarum, parumque dis uisum est esse eum maximum poetarum. Quid tamen his ipsis eius operibus in quae donato imperio iuuenis secesserat sublimius, doctius, omnibus denique numeris praestantius? Quis enim caneret bella melius quam qui sic gerit? Quem praesidentes studiis deae propius audirent? Cui magis suas artis aperiret familiare numen Minerua?*
>
> (*Inst*. 10.91)

Quintilian could be referring here not to the campaign of Judea, but to events in Germany (in 89).[40]

Finally, Silius Italicus acknowledges the literary talent of Domitian in singing epic themes, which would include autobiographical elements: *Huic sua musae / sacra ferent, meliorque lyra, cui substitit Hebrus / et uenit Rhodope, Phoebo miranda loquetur* (*Pun*. 3.619–621).

Addenda.[41] The following writings, with contributions about the writer's own activities or scientific interests containing an autobiographic undercurrent, might also be included in this section:

1. Turranius Gracilis (first century BC – first century AD), an encyclopedist who wrote a monograph on Hispania (Plin., *Nat. His*. 3.3, 9.11, 18.75).

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[40] Coleman, "The Emperors," 3089; the interpretation is from H. Bardon, *Les Empéreurs*, 282–283.

[41] M. Schanz and C. Hosius, *Handbuch*, 784–785.

2. Cornelius Valerianus (first century AD), who supplied data on Egypt (Plin., *Nat. His.* 14.11 and Books 8, 10, 14, and 15).
3. Antonius Castor (first century AD), who had put down on paper the botanical knowledge that he acquired *in situ* (Plin., *Nat. His.* Books 20–27).

III. Flavivs Josephvs

Flavius Josephus (37–100?) is the author of the *Vita Flauii Iosephi*, the only extant "autobiography" from the first century AD[42] written in the *commentarius* genre, of the Hellenistic βίος tradition and of the "*I*-style": the *Vita* could be the first example of the autobiographical genre.[43] Yet the *Vita* does not satisfy the perspectives of researchers seeking to go into greater depths about the author's intentions and actions; its literary structure is discontinuous and pays attention to political figures who may not be leading characters, but seem to take on functions as such—and all of this comes from the pen of the author who wants to write about himself.

We should add that the "autobiography" of Flavius Josephus is only "of the moment" in the *Vita* and that the true "autobiography" appears annotated in his various works, especially in the *Bellum Iudaicum*: the sum of his unilateral contributions constitutes the real "autobiography," which suggests our obligation to finding out how he portrays himself throughout his literary corpus and to comparing the parallel points. Our study therefore will focus on the Flavian "autobiography" with broadmindedness, quoting especially from the *Bellum Iudaicum*, which is not autobiographical from the formal point of view, yet contains very detailed information about the author.

It is true that the *Vita* lacks the essence of the account, the most prestigious elements, so we must assume that Flavius Josephus chose not to repeat the account of the successes and failures already partly found in the *Bellum*. It is not enough, therefore, to say that it is a work unbalanced in its account, or its timings, but we must understand that it

[42] Prior to it, Isocrates' fictitious apologia in his *Antidosis* (354 BC), and of a later date, the εἰς ἑαυτόν (168–180) of the emperor Marcus Aurelius, and the *Confessiones* (397–398) by Augustine of Tagaste. See D. Dormeyer, "Die *Vita* des Josephus als Biographie eines gescheirteten Herrschers," in *Internationales Josephus-Kolloquium Dortmund 2002*, eds. F. Siegert and J.U. Kalms (Münsteraner Judaistiche Studien) 14 (Munster, 2003), 15–33.

[43] B. Schouler, "L'autobiographie de Flavius Josèphe," 2 *Connaissance hellénique* 106 (Université de Provence, 2006), 13–21.

is a biographical sketch of an apologetic, even polemic nature—perhaps a development of some previously noted *hypomnemata* (ὑπομνήματα)[44]—and of self-esteem, which praises a leader who has divine protection and a great capacity for compassion (212).

It is an apologetic work inasmuch as it replies to the attacks of Justus of Tiberias, who in his erroneous history about the events in Judea, had calumniated Flavius Josephus. It is an *apologia* that reaches a sublime tone when the author himself confesses:

> I was now about thirty years old, at a time of life when, even if one restrains his lawless passions, it is hard, especially in a position of high authority, to escape the calumnies of envy. Yet I preserved every woman's honour; I scorned all presents offered to me as having no use for them; I even declined to accept from those who brought them the tithes which were due to me as a priest.
>
> On the other hand, I did take a portion of the spoils after defeating the Syrian inhabitants of the surrounding cities, and admit to having sent these to my kinsfolk in Jerusalem.
>
> And though I took Sepphoris twice by storm, Tiberias four times, and Gabara once; and though I had John many times at my mercy when he plotted against me, I punished neither him nor any of the communities I have named, as the course of this narrative will show.
>
> To this cause I attribute my deliverance out of their hands by God—for His eye is upon those who do their duty—and my subsequent preservation amid the numerous perils, to be related in the sequel, which I encountered. (*Vita* 80–82)

The polemic nature of the *Vita* in the face of the calumnies of Justus of Tiberias gives this work an accusatory tone; motives of coherence (339: "because of his own moderation") are the reason for not having already published it:

> Justus, for instance, having taken upon himself to record the history of this war, has, in order to gain credit for industrious research, not only maligned me, but even failed to tell the truth about his native place.
>
> Being, therefore, now compelled to defend myself against these false allegations, I shall allude to matters about which I have hitherto kept silence. My omission to make such a statement at an earlier date should not occasion surprise. For, while veracity is incumbent upon a historian, he is none

[44] M. Hadas-Lebel, "Le double récit autobiographique chez Flavius Josèphe," in *Invention de l'autobiographie d'Hésiode à Saint Augustin*, Actes du deuxième colloque de l'Équipe de recherche sur l'hellenisme post-classique, Paris, École normal supérieure, 14–16 juin 1990, eds. M.-F. Baslez, P. Hoffmann, L. Pernot (Paris, 1993), 125–132.

> the less at liberty to refrain from harsh scrutiny of the misdeeds of individuals, nor from any partiality for the offenders, but because of his own moderation. (*Vita* 338–339)

In his preface to the *Bellum* (1.1–3), Flavius Josephus denounces the false historians who "have collected from hearsay casual and contradictory stories which they have then edited in a rhetorical style," among whom we find Justus of Tiberias. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that Flavius Josephus is pro-Flavian, a trait that might suggest a deformation of the facts, instead of keeping a discreet silence about possible ill-management. Self-esteem appears in innumerable passages of the *Vita*, to the point of presenting a Flavius Josephus worthy of compassion and of imitation.

The Vita Flavii Josephi[45]

1. Those who have studied the *Vita* have focused their analysis on the historiographical components and on the institutions and the unique nature of the Jewish people. Along with this abundant bibliography there have appeared detailed and reasoned philological studies that pay attention to the intentions of the subject of the biography, and at the same time, to the ideological profile of a person seeking to write about himself: it is on this double aspect that we center our study.

To begin with, researchers see, albeit with diverse shades of meaning, the *Vita* as a response to the attacks that Justus of Tiberias launched in his historical work against a tyrannical Flavius Josephus, a man responsible for the uprising of Tiberias and fallen from grace among Jewish leaders. Yet Laqueur thinks that the response was addressed to the authorities in Jerusalem who were aware of the discontent of those Galileans led by John of Gischala during the time when Flavius Josephus was leader. This points to the existence of some old Flavian ὑπομνήματα, a kind of settling of accounts of the way in which he managed issues in Galilee, which he would subsequently develop in the *Vita*. Cohen thinks that Justus attacked the character of Flavius Josephus rather than the veracity

[45] For the Greek text of the *Vita*, see F. Siegert, H. Schreckenberg, and M. Vogel, *Flavius Josephus. Aus meinem Leben* (*Vita*), der Josephus-Arbeitskreis des Institutum Iudaicum Delitzschianum (Munster, 2001). For the English translation of the texts, see H. ST.J. Thackeray, *Josephus: The Life* (The Loeb Classical Library) (London, 1966). See *RE* s.v. "Josephus," 2 (Stuttgart, 1968). The eighteenth-century translation into English of the *Vita* by William Whiston (1667–1752) is available online at www.gutenberg.org/etext/2846.

of the *Bellum*, while Rajak argues for the retort to Justus, while assuming at the same time that Flavius Josephus took into account the Jewish Diaspora.[46]

2. The *Vita* must have been written in 93/94, if we deem as trustworthy the final words of the conclusion of the *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, where Flavius Josephus promises "to recount briefly my lineage and the events of my life" (20.266), taking into account that Epaphroditus (430), to whom this autobiography is dedicated, died in 95. Many researchers[47] agree with this date:

> Perhaps it will not seem to the public invidious or awkward *for me to recount briefly my lineage and the events of my life* while there are still persons living who can either disprove or corroborate my statements.
>
> With this I shall conclude my *Antiquities*, contained in twenty books with sixty thousand lines. God willing, I shall at some future time compose a running account of the war and of the later *events of our history up to the present day*, which belongs to *the thirteenth year of the reign of Domitian Caesar* and to the fifty-sixth of my life. (*Ant*. 20.266–267)

When writing "for me to recount briefly my lineage and the events of my life" and "events of our history up to the present day," Flavius Josephus was referring to his *Vita*, some slight *commentarii* (*Ant*. 20.267: "God willing, I shall at some future time compose a running account of the war"). "The thirteenth year of the reign of Domitian Caesar" corresponds to the years 93/94, when the emperor was having to face strong opposition and launched the persecution of the Stoics, ending in the execution, at the beginning of 95, of Acilius Glabrius (consul in 91) and of T. Flavius Clemens, his cousin,[48] in the exile of the latter's wife, Flavia Domitilla,[49] and of Epaphroditus.[50] Thus the political situation

[46] For a detailed account of the motivations of the *Vita*, see S. Mason, "An Essay in Character: The Aim and Audience of Josephus's *Vita*," in *Internationales Josephus-Kolloquium Münster 1887*, eds. F. Siegert and J.U. Kalms (Münsteraner Judaistische Studien) 2 (Munster, 1998), 36–44.

[47] Other scholars allow for a second edition of the *Antiquitates* at the beginning of the second century, and the *Vita* would then be its appendix; R. Laqueur, *Der jüdischer Historiker Flavius Josephus. Ein biographischer Versuch auf neuer quellenkritischer Grundlage* (Giessen, 1920); H. ST.J. Thackeray, *Josephus I* (The Loeb Classical Library) 186 (London, 1926), xv; A. Schalit, "Josephus und Justus. Studien zur Vita des Josephus," *Klio* 26 (1933) 67–95. On the chronological issue, see K. Stephan Krieger, "Eine Überlegung zur Datierung der *Vita*," in *Internationales Josephus-Kolloquium Brüssel 1998*, eds. J.U. Kalms and F. Siegert (Münsteraner Judaistische Studien) 4 (Munster, 1999), 189–208.

[48] Suet., *Dom*. 15.1.

[49] Dio, *Hist. Rom*. 67.14.1.

[50] Epaphroditus, Nero's freedman, since 62 secretary *a libellis* (Suet., *Nero* 49.5),

most immediately relevant to our author was not at all peaceful, and for this reason Flavius Josephus had to act with extreme prudence and skill, closing the *Vita* with a series of discreet encomia to treatment received on the part of the imperial family.

Josephus also had to sustain the antagonism of his fellow citizens in Rome as a prisoner "invited" by the emperor, although we should take into account his maneuvers ever since his first contacts with the Roman invaders of Judea: both scenarios were his school of politics, apart from his ability and refinement, characteristic of a Pharisee priest. Undoubtedly, in the work of Flavius Josephus there is a history that is not written down, a silent history, which any researcher will have to take into consideration, even if only by means of ample intuition.

3. The idea of βίος in antiquity does not correspond with history's own imperatives, as it is not a philosophical concept based on principles, not even on literary principles; it would in that case writing "the truth," and this is a literary impossibility. An "autobiographical life," therefore, is not a strict historical work, but an approach to certain personal realities. Such precise statements, as they shape up as text, become perverted to a greater or lesser degree, both consciously and unconsciously, through the prism of the writer himself: the result of "describing oneself or writing about oneself" becomes a pseudo-art or minor literary genre for anyone who competes at making biography out of those personal aspects with a self-satisfying perspective; the final product becomes a more or less useful tool to justify oneself, to praise oneself, to make a defense of one's own deeds and errors, to sow polemic seeds, to feel the pulse of one's own self-esteem and, to cap it all, to show oneself as a model of conduct—an examination of the past to justify the reason of the present,

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intervened in the notification of the plot against Nero (Tac., *Ann*. 15.55.1) and stood by his side until his death (Dio, *Hist. Rom*. 63.29.2); he moved Flavius Josephus to write the *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, and the latter dedicated the *Antiquitates* (*Ant*. 1:8 ff.), the *Vita* (430: "most excellent Epaphroditus"), and *Contra Apionem* (1.1; also quoted in 2.1 and 296) to him. Yet Epaphroditus was exiled by Domitian and died in the year 95 (Dio, *Hist. Rom*. 67.14.4; see *RE*, s.v. "Epaphroditus," 2710–2711, I. Stein [Stuttgart, 1958, 1905]). Possibly, the friendship between Josephus and Epaphroditus strengthened when the *Bellum Iudaicum* had been finished, as he is not quoted in that work, although he is in the *Antiquitates*: "There were certain persons curious about the history who urged me to pursue it, and above all Epaphroditus, a man devoted to every form of learning, but specially interested in the experiences of history, conversant as he himself has been with large affaires and varying turns of fortune, through all which he has displayed a wonderful force of character and an attachment to virtue that nothing could deflect" (*Ant*. 1.8).

without going too deeply into the "cause." All these subtleties are to a greater or lesser degree present in Flavius Josephus' *Vita*.

4. Background: a study about the argumentation of the *Vita* cannot leave aside the vicissitudes of the Jewish people since their initial contacts with the Romans, who—after the fashion of good strategists—embodied the virtues of any highhanded conqueror. We shall limit ourselves here to Flavian references, and should recall that Antiochus IV Epiphanes of Syria (king 175–164 BC) destroyed Jerusalem (170 BC; *Bellum* 1.31 ff.) and had to contend with the Maccabean brothers (from 167 BC), a situation that brought about a treaty with the Romans in the time of Demetrios I Soter, king of Syria (162–150 BC; *Bellum* 1.38 ff.; *1 Mac.* 8.23–32). When the Maccabean period ended with Aristobulus I (105–104 BC), criminal attempts to seize the throne filled the political scenario, while the people rose in revolt and the neighboring kings (Arabia, Syria) launched attacks (*Bellum* 1.70–106; 78 BC), up to the moment when queen Salome Alexandra was able to impose a period of relative calm (78–69 BC). She was succeeded by her ambitious son, Judas Aristobulus II (69–63 BC). In 63 BC, the proconsul Cnaeus Pompey (the Great) put an end to the fictitious reign of Aristobulus II and Judea became incorporated in the Roman province of Syria (*Bellum* 1.131–158).

After another period of instability, the Roman general Gabinius[51] (governor 57–55 BC; *Bellum* 1.160–178) intervened, but his successor as governor of Syria, the triumvir Crassus (*Bellum* 1.179), managed to destroy (54–53 BC) the Temple of Jerusalem: there followed thirteen years of disorder until the Roman Senate declared Herod vassal king of Rome over Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and Idumaea (end of 40 BC; *Bellum* 1.183–285).

The reign of Herod I the Great (73 BC; king 40 BC–c. March 4 BC) brought a period of prosperity for the region, although the period did not lack in intrigue, plots, accusations, and murders (*Bellum* 1.290–673). The Roman presence was consolidated, and Flavius Josephus concludes his account of Herod with these words: "In his life as a whole he was blessed, if ever man was, by fortune: a commoner, he mounted at the throne, retained it for all those years and bequeathed it to his own children; in his family life, on the contrary, no man was more unfortunate" (*Bellum* 1.665).

[51] Cnaeus Pompeius' lieutenant (*Bellum* 1.140), governor of Syria (160.178, 244), destroyed the fortress of Machaerus (7.171).

5. During the period of 4 BC–AD 66, Palestine immersed itself in a bloodbath (uprisings, anarchies, and excesses). This favored even further the positioning of the Romans in the region. Josephus devotes to this period of 62 years the second book of the *Bellum Iudaicum*. The following is the detail of the reigns of Jewish characters at the service of the conquerors and of the gradually more and more intense Roman meddling:

Jews	Romans
Archelaus succeeds Herod the Great (4 BC; *Bellum* 2.1–15) and departs for Rome to have his status confirmed.	Sabinus, Roman procurator of Syria, takes possession of the palace in Jerusalem (*Bellum* 2.16 ff.): on the occasion of the feast of the Pentecost (end of May, 4 BC), a bloody battle takes place between Jews and Romans (*Bellum* 2.40–54) and general anarchy spreads throughout Palestine (Idumea, Judas in Galilee, Simon in Perea, the shepherd Athrongaeus; *Bellum* 2.55–65). Varro, the governor of Syria, takes over from Sabinus: campaigns in Galilee, Samaria, Jerusalem, and Idumea (*Bellum* 2.66–79).
Antipas, Herod's son and heir, claims the throne (*Bellum* 2.20 ff.) and is appointed tetrarch by Augustus (*Bellum* 2.94 ff.).	
Antipater, son of Salome (sister of Herod the Great), accuses Archelaus in Rome (*Bellum* 2.26–33).	
Archelaus is deposed by Augustus (AD 6; *Bellum* 2.111–113).	
After the death of Archelaus, the Roman procurator Coponius reduces Judaea to the status of a Roman province (AD 6–9; *Bellum* 2.117), and John of Gamala (in the Gaulanitis region; *Ant.* 18.4) founds the fanatic faction of the zealots (*Bellum* 2.118), which at the time of the last Roman procurator, Florus, precipitated hostilities (*Bellum* 2.118).	Augustus receives a Jewish embassy of 50 members asking for autonomy, and ends up dividing Herod's kingdom among the latter's three children: Archelaus as ethnarch, Herod Antipas and Philippus as tetrarchs (*Bellum* 2.80–100).
Tetrarchs Herod Antipas and Philippus maintain their respective governments (*Bellum* 2.167). Herod founds Tiberias in Galilee in honor of the new emperor (*Bellum* 2.168).	Augustus dies (AD 14); is succeeded by Tiberius (*Bellum* 2.168).
AD 33–34: Philippus dies (*Bellum* 2.181).	AD 26–36: the procurator of Judea, Pontius Pilate, introduces effigies of the emperor and takes money from the temple (*Bellum* 2.169–177; *Ant.* 18.55–62).
AD 36: Agrippa I, son of Aristobulus, who accuses Herod in front of Tiberius, is put in prison (*Bellum* 2.178–180; see *Ant.* 18.126).	AD 37: Accession of Caligula (*Bellum* 2.181).

In all these historical data contributed by Flavius Josephus himself, researchers have before their eyes an irreplaceable perspective on some very difficult times for the Jewish people, no doubt just as had happened

in previous times. Nevertheless, in the current situation, the enemy was called not just "the Jewish people" but also "Rome."

6. Structure: the objective of the *Vita* conditions its structure, "to combat the calumnies that Justus of Tiberias had spread out against Flavius Josephus in his history about the same facts that had taken place in Judaea." For the researcher, therefore, Justus has to be viewed as the cause and the "why" of the *Vita*, and this accounts for a certain narrative imbalance, a lack of thematic order, as the account basically seeks to counteract historical falsehoods: this literary focus generates a tripartite structure resulting from its very dynamism, and the following is its synopsis:

I. First Part	II. Second Part	III. Third Part
1. Early years (1–16).	Core of the *Vita* (17–413)	Last sketches
	1. First contacts with reality (17–83). 2. The internal discourse. 3. Flavius Josephus, the General. 4. Flavius Josephus—Opposition. 5. The leader rebuked. 6. Documentary excursus. 7. Strategy as a deterrent discourse. 8. Start of the Great War. 9. The philology of the "I." 10. Flowering decline.	1. Misfortunes and survival (414–427). 2. Epilogues (428–430).

I. First Part

1. *Early Years (Vita 1–16)*

Flavius Josephus was born in the year AD 37 in Jerusalem (*Vita* 7) into the scenario detailed above: his βίος will develop into a *commentarius* about the political crises that affected his public actions in Galilee over six months at the beginning of the Great War. We recall that it will be necessary to have a wide view about the life of Flavius Josephus, spread across his works with varying intensity, in order to obtain a fair image of his personality. It is Flavius Josephus himself who marks the difference between his actions during the war against the Romans (*Vita* 412: "my conduct during the siege of that place [Jotapata], how I lived, my capture and imprisonment, and subsequent liberation, of my deeds throughout the whole campaign and at the siege of Jerusalem, I have given a detailed description in my books on the Jewish War") and the actions that affect particularly his personal life (*Vita* 413: "It is, however, I think, incumbent upon me now to append an account of such particulars of my life as were

not recorded in my work on the Jewish War"). The *Vita*, therefore, will not show what Flavius Josephus already wrote in the *Bellum Iudaicum*, but rather what better represents his life as a politician and is not clearly stated in the *Bellum*.[52]

A synoptic vision running mainly according to the guidelines of the *Vita* results in a stereotypical part (paragraphs 1–12), that will include the earliest years of the author, which will conclude with the start of his public career (13–16):

Bellum Iudaicum		*Antiquitates Iudaicae*	*Vita*
(AD 75–79)		(ends 93–94)	(93–99)
Historiographic Criteria / Table of Contents		Historiographic Criteria	Pedigree
1.1–2, 19–30.		1.1–26 (see 2.266).	1–4: 158 BC–AD 36
Josephus' Credentials			
1.3, 5.419 and 544, 5.533.			
Jews	Romans		
AD 37: Agrippa I, released by Caligula, accepts the tetrarchy of Philippus with the title of king (*Bellum* 2.181).	AD 37: Caligula, emperor (*Bellum* 2.181).		"I was born in the year in which Gaius Caesar became Emperor" (= Caligula: AD 37–41; *Vita* 5): between September 13, 37 and March 17, 38.
Herod Antipas dies in exile (*Bellum* 2.183).	Caligula erects his statue in the temple: Petronius marches with three legions from Syria over Judea (*Bellum* 2.184–187, 192–203).		
Agrippa I, king of all Judea, and Herod, king of Calchis (*Bellum* 2.214–217).	January AD 4: Caligula dies (*Bellum* 2.204; see *Ant*. 19.105 ff.).		Education
AD 44: Agrippa I dies.	Claudius, new emperor (*Bellum* 2.204 ff.).		7–8: "progress in my education, gaining a reputation for an excellent memory and understanding" (8).

[52] E. Migliario, "Per l'interpretazione dell'autobiografia di Flavio Giuseppe," *Athenaeum* 26 (1933), 65–95; D. Lamour, "L'organisation du récit dans l'*Autobiographie* de Flavius Josèphe," *Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé, juin 1996*, 2, 141–150, "L'*Autobiographie* de Flavius Josèphe ou le roman d'une vie," *RBPhH* 77[1] (1999), 104–130.

Bellum Iudaicum		*Antiquitates Iudaicae*	*Vita*
AD 48: Herod of Calchis dies; Agrippa II ascends (AD 48–52; *Bellum* 2.214 ff.). Sedition in Jerusalem (Easter) (*Bellum* 2.224–227); theft, profanation of the Bible (*Bellum* 2.228–231). Murder of a Galilaean (or some of them: *Ant.* 20.118) while on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem: massacres; attack in Samaria (*Bellum* 2.232 ff.). AD 53: Agrippa II, king of the Trachonitis (*Bellum* 2.247). Hired assassins, prophets, impostors (*Bellum* 2.254–265).	All of Judea under procurators. AD 48–52: Cumanus, procurator. Quadratus, governor of Syria, intervenes (*Bellum* 2.241–244). AD 52–60: Felix, procurator of Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and Perea (*Bellum* 2.247). AD 54: Claudius dies (*Bellum* 2.248). Oct. 13, AD 54: Nero (*Bellum* 2.247–251).	Schools: 13.171–173, 18.11 Pharisees: 18.12–15; Sadducees: 13.293 and 297 ff., 18.16 ff., 20.199; Essenes: 13.171 ff., 15.371 ff., 18.18–22; fourth philosophy (Judas the Galilaean): 18.9 and 23 ff., main cause of the war.	At age 14 (AD 51–52): "about fourteen years old, I won universal applause for my love of letters; insomuch that the chief priests and the leading men of the city used constantly to come to me for precise information on our ordinances" (9).[53] At 16–19 years (AD 53–56): Schools: 10–12: "at about the age of sixteen I determined to gain personal experience of the several sects;" follower of the Essenian eremite Bannus for 3 years; he joins the Pharisees. 20–25 years (AD 57–62): ? 26/27 years: he travels to Rome with political aims (AD 63–64); shipwreck: he is saved "through providence of God" (13–16).

[53] Flavius Josephus belonged in all probability to the party of the Sadducees, of

Bellum Iudaicum		*Antiquitates Iudaicae*	*Vita*
Schools: Essenes: 2.119–161; Pharisees: 2.162–163; Sadducees: 2.164–166, 2.569–646.			
Jews	Romans		
AD 59–60: disorders in Caesarea, Jews against Syrians. Felix intervenes (*Bellum* 2.266–270).	Last procurators:		
	Festus: AD 60–62		
	Albinus: AD 62–64 (*Bellum* 2.272–276).		
	Florus: AD 64–66 (*Bellum* 2.277–279).		

2. *Rome:* AD *64*

Flavius Josephus reaches Rome in the year in which the city was burnt (July 64), and the visit proved a true revelation, as he understood that the power of Rome was truly invincible. There is no doubt that Flavius Josephus lived by rational accommodations, and in this sense he knew how to interpret the historical facts in respect to the future more than most of his fellow countrymen; in this case, Rome was a thorough lesson in political science. In addition, Flavius Josephus established himself in the art of diplomacy at the court, as even the empress Poppaea looked with favor on his intentions with the emperor by freeing some Jewish priests, and she loaded him with presents (16).

I think that the sympathies felt for Rome by Flavius Josephus are now confirmed, if they existed before the visit, or were felt now, and not at a later stage when he had to surrender to the Romans after the fall of Jotapata (July 67; *Vita* 412; *Bellum* 3.316 ff.). Nevertheless, Flavius Josephus is silent on significant vicissitudes that took place during this visit.[54]

Hellenistic leaning, and disappeared after the fall of Jerusalem, when he writes the *Vita*, where he prefers to appear as a Pharisee (12: "being now in my nineteenth year I began to govern my life by the rules of the Pharisees, a sect having points of resemblance to that which the Greeks call the Stoic school") for reasons of image (see S. Mason, *Flavius Josephus on the Pharisees* [Leiden, 1991]); on his religious experiences and education, see André Lemaire, "L'expérience essénienne de Flavius Josephus," in *Internationales Josephus-Kolloquium Paris 2001*, eds. F. Siegert and J.U. Kalms (Münsteraner Judaistische Studien) 12 (Munster, 2002), 138–151.

[54] M. Bohrmann, "Le voyage à Rome de Flavius Josèphe (*Vita* 13–16)," in *Inter-*

3. *Jerusalem: AD 65 (Autumn?)*

On his return to Jerusalem, Flavius Josephus found the city and the country up in arms: during Passover, anti-Roman Jews had denounced Gessius Florus, a detestable Roman procurator, in office since AD 64: "It was Florus who constrained us to take up the war with the Romans, for we preferred to perish together than by degrees" (*Ant*. 20.257).[55]

II. Second Part. Core of the Vita (17–413)

1. *First Contacts with Reality (Vita 17–83)*

Indeed, the generalized chaos brought about in Flavius Josephus his initial stand, and it will justify his later behavior—to deter his fellow countrymen from rebelling against the Romans, opening their eyes before the nation "on which they were about to make war, and to remember that they were inferior to the Romans, not only in military skill, but in good fortune" (*Vita* 17)—but all was in vain (18–20): he takes refuge in the temple; the anti-Roman leaders are executed by a rival faction (*Bellum* 2.433–448 = *Vita* 21). Flavius Josephus joins the high priests and the Pharisees: "we were, however, in a state of great alarm; we saw the populace in arms and were at a loss what to do ourselves, being powerless to check the revolutionaries" (*Vita* 22). Flavius Josephus and the Pharisees try to calm them while awaiting the arrival of Cestius Gallus, Roman governor of Syria, to pacify the insurrection (*Vita* 22–23).

2. *The Internal Discourse (Bellum Iudaicum 2.284 ff.; Vita 24 ff.)*

Flavius Josephus scrupulously notes the pretexts that provoked the worst war ever sustained by the Jews against any enemy—out of the innumerable number of them waged throughout their long history. But this time it was the greatest enemy they had ever had, Rome, and the initial "pretext" became a motive of motives, and at the end the Jewish people brought upon itself its own ruin through lack of leadership, lack of diplomatic skill, defense of personal interests over those of the homeland, internal

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nationales Josephus-Kolloquium Brüssel 1998, eds. F. Siegert and J.U. Kalms (Münsteraner Judaistische Studien) 4 (Munster, 1999), 222–229; P. McKechnie, "Judaean Embassies and Cases before Roman Emperors, AD 44–66," *JThS*, n.s. 56.2 (2005), 339–361.

[55] The idea, in Tac., *Hist*. 5.10: *durauit tamen patientia Iudaeis usque ad Gessium Florum procuratorem: sub eo bellum ortum*.

ethnic quarrels, riots in the cities themselves, and fighting against neighboring countries. The Jewish people was sacrificing itself for the sake of an already non-existent liberty ever since the beginning, as prisoner of its own conceptions as to its meaning it had become fuel for the flames of its own history.[56]

2.1. *The First Pretext (Caesarea: c. AD May 66)*

A part of what has been said is acknowledged by Flavius Josephus himself throughout his works, but he expresses it in a much more realistic way when he writes:

> Meanwhile the Greeks of Caesarea had won their case at Caesar's tribunal, and obtained from him the government of that city; they brought back with them the text of the decision, and *it was now that the war opened*, in the twelfth year of the Principate of Nero 66 AD, and the seventeenth of the reign of Agrippa, in the month of Artemisius. The ostensible pretext (πρόφασις) for war was *out of proportion to the magnitude of the disasters to which it led*. (*Bellum* 2.284–285)

Indeed, the foolish intervention of the Roman Gessius Florus, in the affair of city properties adjacent to the synagogue of Caesarea (*Bellum* 2.285–292), sparked off the hatred between Jew and Greek and led them to a growing number of brawls that were the start of the consequential, serious hostilities.

Thus, the war as such between the Jews and the Romans "began in the second year of the procuratorship of Florus and in the twelfth of Nero's reign [= AD 66]. But all the things that we were forced to do or sufferings that we endured may be learnt with accuracy by any who choose to read the books that I have written on the *Jewish War*" (*Ant*. 20.257–258).

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[56] Tacitus (*Hist*. 5.1–13) argues that the traditions of the Jewish people were the cause of the war, although the destruction was due to the military superiority of the Romans and the help of the gods. Flavius Josephus alleges (*Bellum* 4.388) the factions within the Jewish people and in their machinations as the cause of self-destruction; also: *Bellum* 1.10–12, 4.397; 5.19–28, 442–445; 6.128–130; see M. Stern, "Aspects of Jewish Society: The Priesthood and Other Classes" in *The Jewish People in the First Century. Historical Geography, Political History, Social, Cultural and Religious Life and Institutions*, eds. S. Safrai and M. Stern, 2 vols. (Amsterdam, 1974–1976), 2:577–580; K.S. Kieger, "Beobachtungen zu Flavius Josephus' Terminologie für die jüdischen Aufständischen gegen Rom in der *Vita* und im *Bellum Judaicum*," in *Internationales Josephus-Kolloquium Brüssel 1998*, eds. J.U. Kalms and F. Siegert (Münsteraner Judaistische Studien) 4 (Munster, 1999), 209–221; G.E. Sterling, "Explaining Defeat: Polybius and Josephus on the Wars with Rome," in *Internationales Josephus-Kolloquium Paris 2001*, eds. F. Siegert and J.U. Kalms (Münsteraner Judaistische Studien) 12 (Munster, 2002), 135–151 (here, 146–148).

Indeed, Flavius Josephus points here that the *Bellum Iudaicum*, published before the *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, is, from the point of view of the subject matter, a continuation of and a historical complement to them, while the conclusion-synthesis of his activity as political and military leader will be detailed in the *Vita*.

2.2. *Second Pretext (Jerusalem: 3 June AD 66)*
Jerusalem revolts, procurator Florus loots the temple of Jerusalem and hands the city over to his soldiers (*Bellum* 2.293–308) in the absence of King Agrippa II (who is in Egypt for personal reasons) and maltreats Berenice, the king's sister, who implores him to put an end to the chaos (*Bellum* 2.309–314). These incidents would not calm things down:

> These events took place on the sixteenth of the month Artemisias. On the following day the multitude, overcome with distress, flocked to the upper agora, uttering terrific lamentations for the dead.
>
> Alarmed at this outburst, the leading men and the chief priests rent their clothes and, falling at the feet of one after another of the mob, implored them to desist and not to provoke Florus. (*Bellum* 2.315–316)

Florus proceeds to evacuate Jerusalem (*Bellum* 2.332 ff.) with two cohorts from Caesarea (*Bellum* 2.318–331). Agrippa returns from Alexandria (*Bellum* 2.335) and harangues the Jews in order to dissuade them from going to war against the Romans (*Bellum* 2.345–404).

2.3. *Third Pretext (July? AD 66)*
The Jewish insurgents occupy Masada (*Bellum* 2.408); sacrifices for Rome in the temple of Jerusalem cease (*Bellum* 2.409: "these actions laid *the foundation of the war* with the Romans").

2.4. *Fourth Pretext (August AD 66)*
The rebels seize a part of Jerusalem and set fire to the archives; Menahem, at the head of the rebels, dies at the hands of Eleazar in the Ophlas quarter; massacre of the Roman garrison (*Bellum* 2.425–456). The war spreads: Caesarea, Syria, Scythopolis, Cyprus, Machaerus, Alexandria. Cestius Gallus, governor of Syria, reduces Galilee and enters Jerusalem (*Bellum* 2.457–515) where he is apparently defeated, hence the pro-Flavian lament: "and this reverse of Cestius proved disastrous to our whole nation; for those who were bent on war were thereby still more elated and, having once defeated the Romans, hoped to continue victori-

ous to the end" (*Vita* 24). Flavius Josephus admits that the war has been unilaterally declared by the insurgent Jewish faction.

2.5. *Fifth Pretext (15–22 October AD 66)*
The Feast of the Tabernacles in Jerusalem ends with deaths and fires ordered by Cestius (*Bellum* 2.516). There is a partial success of the Jews outside Jerusalem, and an attempt at amnesty by king Agrippa, which sets off an unforeseeable internecine reaction (*Bellum* 2.517–526).

2.6. *Sixth Pretext (c. 17 November AD 66)*
Cestius occupies Bezetha quarter in Jerusalem, burning part of the city and the temple, and strategically withdraws (*Bellum* 2.527–553).

2.7. *Seventh Pretext (25 November AD 66)*
The Jews pursue Cestius and fall into his trap; it is open war:

> The Jews continued the pursuit as far as Antipatris, and then, failing to overtake the Romans, turned and carried off the machines, plundered the corpses, collected the booty which had been left on the route, and, with songs of triumph, retraced their steps to the capital. Their own losses had been quite inconsiderable; of the Romans and their allies they had slain five thousand three hundred infantry and four hundred and eighty of the cavalry.
>
> This action took place on the eighth of the month Dius in the twelfth year of Nero's principate. (*Bellum* 2.554–555).

All this confusion of pretexts, not of causes, provokes an inevitable reaction: the leading men of Jerusalem abandon the city, and Cestius tells Nero of the reverses in Palestine (*Bellum* 2.556–558). To this state of things one should also add the crimes against the Jews in the cities near Syria, mainly in Scythopolis and Damascus (*Vita* 25–26; *Bellum* 2.559–561). Judaea, therefore, is on a war footing.

2.8. *Results*
Given all of this, Flavius Josephus draws his conclusions: the Great War has only just started, and in the face of reality, he feels compelled to justify the conduct of his fellow countrymen invoking a classic concept, alien to people of faith, apparently fallacious and out of context, when he writes: "I merely refer to them here from a desire to convince my readers that the war with the Romans was due not so much to the deliberate choice of the Jews as to *necessity*" (27 ἀνάγκη).

Flavius Josephus, then, is not free of a certain ideological liberalism, a Hellenizing slant, despite the fact that his pharisaic stoicism may keep him within his religious beliefs: the ἀνάγκη is presented here as the αἰτία that justifies any future wars, when in fact it is no more than a circumstantial "pretext." Flavius Josephus metamorphoses the harsh reality into his own conviction, at least on paper.

As of this point in the work, it will be Flavius Josephus himself who will intervene in the history of his country, while the *Vita* will only collect background details of the Great War (years 66–73). The truth is that paragraphs 568–646 of the Second Book of the *Bellum Iudaicum* contain the central contents of the *Vita*.

3. *Flavius Josephus, the General (December? AD 66)*

The Jews, desirous of a peaceful solution, sense that they should at least prepare themselves to counterattack the Romans. This moderate faction, made up of Pharisees and Sadducees, in clear opposition to the zealots—among whose ranks could be found the radical rebels—launches organized actions, starting with the election of their generals (*Bellum* 2.562–565) to whom they would entrust key parts of the territory (*Bellum* 2.566–568).

3.1. *Flavius Josephus, Commissioner for Galilee*

Galilee has been allotted to Flavius Josephus, and here are the three stages of his management, according to the *Bellum*:

> 1. Josephus, son of Matthias, was given the two Galilees, with the addition of Gamala, the strongest city in that region.
>
> Each of these generals executed his commission to the best of his zeal or ability. As for Josephus, on his arrival in Galilee, he made it his first care to win the affection of the inhabitants, knowing that this would be of the greatest advantage to him, however he might otherwise fail. He realized that he could conciliate the leaders by associating them with him in his authority, and the people at large, if his orders were in the main given through the medium of their local acquaintances …
>
> (*Bellum* 2.568–570)

> 2. Josephus, foreseeing that Galilee would bear the brunt of the Romans' opening assault, he fortified the most suitable places … he further provided with walls the caves in Lower Galilee in the neighbourhood of the lake of Gennesareth, and in the Upper Galilee the rock known as Accharon, Seph, Jamnith, and Mero. In Gaulanitis he fortified Seleucia, Soganaea and Gamala. The inhabitants of Sepphoris alone were authorized by him

> to erect walls on their own account … The other fortresses were all built under the personal superintendence of Josephus, who both assisted in and directed the operations. (*Bellum* 2.572–575)

> 3. He, moreover, levied in Galilee an army of upwards of a hundred thousand young men, all of whom he equipped with old arms collected for the purpose … He had now mustered an army, ready for action, of sixty thousand infantry [he said 100,000 earlier] and three hundred and fifty cavalry, besides some four thousand five hundred mercenaries … he has also a body guard of six hundred picked men about his person. (*Bellum* 2.576, 583)

From this moment onward, the public figure of Flavius Josephus will not cease to grow, whether he is the commander-in-chief of the whole of Galilee (*Bellum* 2.568–583), or whether he has simply been commissioned to calm the Galilean revolutionaries (*Vita* 28–29) to the point where he will exclude any colleague who could put him in the shade.[57] The leading arguments, therefore, of the *Vita* start at this moment. Thus "the leading men of Jerusalem" (*Vita* 28) send Joazar and Judas, distinguished priests (*Vita* 29), to Flavius Josephus in Galilee, "to induce the disaffected to put down arms," but they stayed "in readiness for future contingencies, but should wait in order to know what action the Romans would take."

3.2. *Quot capita, tot sententiae*

Galilee is divided into different factions, the cities opting for different positions concerning the Roman presence; the citizen body is divided, and there is opposition among the leaders themselves.

The city of Sepphoris (I) presents itself as pro-Roman (30–31: "I, however, entirely allayed their fears, by exerting my influence with the populace on their behalf"), but Tiberias (II) divides into three factions: (a) respectable citizens, "unanimous in recommending the city to continue its allegiance to the Romans and the king" (Herod Agrippa I, 32–34); (b) insignificant persons bent on war and against Sepphoris (35); (c) Justus of Tiberias, who was induced to take up arms (his vignette, 36–42: "to him and to his brother our ruin was almost entirely due" [41]).

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[57] An unfair attitude, according to R. Laqueur, *Der jüdischer Historiker Flavius Josephus. Ein biographischer Versuch auf neuer quellenkritischer Grundlage* (Giessen, 1920), 103 ff. See Laurence Brottier, "Flavius Josèphe en Galilée: les ambiguïtés d'un image," *Rev. de Philology* 69 (1995), 75–93.

In Gischala (III), John, son of Levi, favorable to maintaining the allegiance to the Romans, sees his city set on fire by the inhabitants of neighboring cities. He goes on to attack them and to fortify his city with a view to future security (43–45).

Gamala (IV) will remain loyal to Rome (46–53), even if personal ambitions will provoke quarrels between pro-Romans and anti-Romans (54–61).

Up to this point, our historian has skillfully woven the narrative fabric with the idea that his leadership be later accepted for more than justifiable reasons. In this sense, the long section of the *Vita* that follows (to section 414) will have Flavius Josephus as the leading character raising strong opposition—it's not just the cities that are in turmoil, but the internal imbalance that produces an outright refusal of any imposition stemming from Jerusalem. And the imposition is called Flavius Josephus.

3.3. *Flavius Josephus Is Challenged*

Josephus makes his first contact with Galilee on arriving in Sepphoris, where he receives instructions from the Sanhedrin to take the relevant precautions. But his first intervention in Betmaus—demolition of the palace of Herod the tetrarch, owing to the presence of representations of living beings—ends in looting and the death of Greek residents, something that infuriates Flavius Josephus (62–69): this was not his mission, which was to preserve peace in the region (see 29).

3.4. *Internal Opposition*

It is then that the main stumbling block to Flavius Josephus' public actions emerges: John of Gischala. Purportedly pro-Roman (see 43–45), he takes advantage of the crisis to increase his personal interests:

Bellum Iudaicum	*Vita*	
John of Gischala	Gischala	John of Gischala
2.585–594: John of Gischala wanted to be the governor of Galilee (593). He accuses Flavius Josephus of handing the country over to the Romans (594).	Flavius Josephus meets up with John of Gischala: disappointment; the war is a business for John (70–76); his two colleagues return to Jerusalem with financial rewards (77).	John of Gischala asks Flavius Josephus for the wheat of Upper Galilee, with the help of which he would rebuild the walls of Gischala (71); negative (72).

Bellum Iudaicum	*Vita*	
John of Gischala provokes anarchy, leading a group of bandits with the idea of testing the ability of Flavius Josephus (593).	Flavius Josephus promises a payment to the bandits of the area, "for my chief concern was the preservation of peace in Galilee" (78) and attracts 70 magistrates of Galilee (79).	John of Gischala obtains his petition from Flavius Josephus' other two colleagues (73). The latter ends up allowing John to take oil to Caesarea Philippi, so John becomes rich (74–76).[58]

3.5. *A Narcissistic Excursus*

Flavius Josephus proposes an ethical thesis: "I was now about thirty years old, at a time of life when, even if one restrains his lawless passions, it is hard, especially in a position of high authority, to escape the calumnies of envy" (80). To the core ideas, such as authority and envy, both of which generate calumnies, Flavius Josephus replies with a moralizing program: he shows respect for women ("I preserved every woman's honour"), refuses presents ("I scorned all presents offered to me") and the priestly tithe that corresponds to him (80: "the tithes which were due to me as a priest"). He only takes booty from the defeated Syrians to help his relatives (81), does not take revenge on Sepphoris, Tiberias, Gabara, or on John of Gischala (τιμωρήσαμην; 82: "though I had John many times at my mercy when he plotted against me, I punished neither him nor any of the communities"). All of this is based upon a theological foundation: God protects those who act with rectitude and preserves them from future dangers (83: "for His eye is upon those who do their duty"). The social projection of Flavius Josephus' conduct is made manifest especially in the reaction of the people of Galilee, who showed him their loyalty and affection (84–86), something that increases John of Gischala's envy.

4. *Flavius Josephus—Opposition (Vita 87–367)*

From this moment on, the *Vita* revolves around two disparate activities: that of Flavius Josephus' sense of political responsibility, and that of the unremittingly captious interests of John of Gischala, of cities, or of various groups (87–335). This central part of the work will end with a digression of a polemical nature (336–367). At any rate, the underlying

[58] See M. Bohrmann, "Die Beziehungen zwischen Johannes aus Giskala und Josephus in der Frage des Ölhandels," in *Internationales Josephus-Kolloquium Münster 1997*, eds. F. Siegert and J.U. Kalms, (Münsteraner Judaistische Studien) 2 (Munster, 1998), 136–143.

picture of Flavius Josephus does not exactly indicate behavior free of accusations, as the profile that will emerge is that of a leader, even of a petty tyrant, and he will therefore have three open fronts: that of his opponent John of Gischala, that of the population, and that of his own somewhat ambiguous positioning—at first in favor of an alliance with the Romans, and later in favor of going to war against them, if we are to believe the history written by Justus of Tiberias, which directly contradicts him.[59]

4.1. *John of Gischala: A Political Competitor*

John of Gischala is, in part, the symbol of the real situation of the Jewish people: he will be the main instigator of the set of plots directed against Flavius Josephus. With the excuse of taking the waters in the hot springs of Tiberias (84–86), John of Gischala takes advantage of the occasion to win over some of the inhabitants of Tiberias, some of whom abandon Flavius Josephus (87–88; *Bellum* 2.614–631). In these circumstances, a letter from Silas, superintendent at Tiberias, explains to him the situation of the city (89). At daybreak Flavius Josephus turns up in Tiberias and advises its inhabitants against rebellion (90–93); while still talking, he comes under attack from the envoys of John of Gischala, but manages to flee to Tarichaea by sea (94–96). The inhabitants there, angry with the instigator of the ambush, rouse the whole of Galilee to rebel against Tiberias (97–99).

Flavius Josephus shows at this time his political awareness, conscious as he was that the evil was to be found inside the Jewish people itself, something of which the Romans, who knew the Semite peoples well, would take advantage. The internal break-up of the Jewish people, or of the various Jewish peoples, to judge by the huge disparity of opinions, had undermined the actual idea of "a Jewish people"; to this should also be added the lack of a territorial unity—a truly disparate jigsaw puzzle made up of varying ethnicities—to the point that Flavius Josephus himself feels compelled to carry out a confession of faith to reality, in the face of the insistence of the inhabitants of Tarichaea and other Galileans who press him to take up arms against his Tiberian brothers, ending with the following conclusion:

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[59] Mason compiles in detail the traits of Josephus' good character ("An Essay in Character," 62–66) and the vices of his opponents (68–70). There were some other accusers of Josephus, as seen in paragraph 424 (*Bellum* 7.437–450).

> I, however, could not assent to their proposal: I was horrified at the thought of opening a civil war, and considered that the quarrel should not go further than verbal remonstrances.
>
> Moreover, I told them that the action suggested would not be to their own advantage; since the Romans were only waiting for the rival factions to bring about their own ruin.
>
> With these words I appeased the anger of the Galilaeans. (*Vita* 99–100)

4.2. *Popular Reaction (Winter AD 66/67)*

John of Gischala now finds himself in a fairly weak situation and falsely presents his excuses to Flavius Josephus for what has happened (100), while Galilaeans arriving from all over the country request the destruction of Gischala and its leader. Flavius Josephus checks his desire for vengeance and sets out for Sepphoris (101–103), which remains loyal to the Romans (see 30–31), but fearing Flavius Josephus' calls upon some bandits from Ptolemaida to kill him; the plot was foiled (104–111): "the Sepphorites I threatened to punish if they did not abandon their insensateness" (111). Flavius Josephus treats with generosity two rich subjects of Agrippa II from the Trachonitis area; they wish to establish themselves among the Jews and are being forced to undergo circumcision (112–113), "declaring that every one should worship God in accordance with the dictates of his own conscience and not under constraint."

In these circumstances, Flavius Josephus makes first contact with the Roman Decurion Aebutius in Simonias, chases him as far as Besara, which he besieges, takes the wheat from Queen Berenice, challenges Aebutius, and attacks Neapolitanus, who had just looted Tiberias (114–121).

5. *The Leader Rebuked*

John of Gischala, envious of the position of Flavius Josephus—"hoping to check my good fortune by inspiring hatred of me in those under my command" (123)—tries to win over the three leading cities of Galilee: Tiberias, Sepphoris, and Gabara. Only the last of the three appear to agree to this (122–125). Next, the *Vita* and the *Bellum* recount an endless amount of setbacks for Flavius Josephus:

Bellum	*Vita*	
The affair of Dabarittha has negative consequences for Flavius Josephus: 2.595–613.	Tarichaea Plot against Flavius Josephus in Tarichaea (132–135), and he defends himself before the people (138: "committing my fate to God") for the loot, (136–144). New plot: Flavius Josephus escapes (145–148). Incidents against the two tycoons (see 112–113); Flavius Josephus sends them by sea to Hippo (149–154).	Great Plain of Esdraelon Some youths from Dabarittha rob the caravan of the wife of Ptolemy, the king's quartermaster; Flavius Josephus returns the booty to the king (126–131), which brings about the charge of seeking to hand over the country to the Romans (129 and 132).
Tiberias John of Gischala intensifies his attacks against Flavius Josephus, bribing the citizens of Tiberias, rousing them to revolt and preparing an ambush against him (2.614–619). Flavius Josephus disperses the followers of John of Gischala, and many Galileans submit to him (2.620–625). John of Gischala sends envoys to Jerusalem to denounce Flavius Josephus as a tyrant if he is not deposed in time: 2.626–631. Tiberias and Sepphoris rise, ask king Agrippa for help. Flavius Josephus will go there personally and appease them. A few days later new disturbances in Tiberias and Sepphoris, again put down by Flavius Josephus (2.632–646).	Tiberias Flavius Josephus reaches Tiberias: he orders the construction of walls (156); he returns to headquarters. Tarichaea Three days later Flavius Josephus leaves for Tarichaea; Roman soldiers pass close to Tiberias: its inhabitants think they are king's men, praise the king and curse Flavius Josephus (157–158), who arrives in Tiberias by sea (159–164). Tiberias Josephus against Tiberias, which he calms down; takes ten notables as hostages (165–168). Tarichaea Flavius Josephus steadies the Tarichaeans and punishes the leader Clitus of Tiberias (169–173); he lets them know that they will not find a general more considerate than he (176) and releases the prisoners (174–178).	Tiberias The Tiberians write to king Agrippa II asking for troops, with the idea of striking an alliance with him (155). *Digression*. The dynasty of the Jewish kings was not accepted by most Jewish people owing to its connivance with the Romans, and in the present circumstances, the inhabitants of Gamala and the region of Gaulanitis rose against king Agrippa II (179–187).

Josephus fortifies many Galilean cities (188), as he had understood that the Great War against the Romans was now inevitable (= *Bellum* 2.647–651), and from now on he uses all sorts of personal quarrels with John of Gischala in his race for power. This occupies a great part of the *Vita* (189–406) with the aim of justifying his honest political behavior; the opposition of the Galileans who did not see in Flavius Josephus a commander with firm ideals of anti-Roman resistance persists.

5.1. *Flavius Josephus' Leadership, sub iudice*

John of Gischala asks the Sanhedrin of Jerusalem for the dismissal of Flavius Josephus as military governor of Galilee and volunteers for the position; long negotiations and bribes ensue (189–196); the plot has been woven: a delegation of four members arrives to replace him (196–198) together with an army (199–201). In addition, the order is given to send Flavius Josephus to Jerusalem; if he shows resistance, the order is to kill him, and they write to John of Gischala for an attack against Flavius Josephus, ordering Sepphoris, Gabara, and Tiberias to send him reinforcements (202–203).

Flavius Josephus receives a letter from his father telling him about the decisions made in Jerusalem; he wants to flee, but many Galileans implore him to stay (204–207). That same night, Flavius Josephus has a dream: he will enjoy good fortune, he will be successful in many enterprises, but he will end up fighting against the Romans (208–211). Flavius Josephus gives in to compassion (212) before the multitude assembles on the plain; he gathers more than 8,000 soldiers and stations himself near Cabul, pretending that he is to confront Placidus, sent by Cestius Gallus (212–215).

5.2. *The Hero, Sentenced to Death (Vita 216–335)*

After the dream, Flavius Josephus feels invested of a more-than-natural capacity, despite the enemies he has in the bosom of political power in Jerusalem. The delegation from Jerusalem duly arrives, headed by Jonathan, who summons Flavius Josephus (216–225 [by a letter: 217–218]) who is in Cabul, but the latter refuses the invitation with another letter (226–227) after finding out from the messenger about his death sentence. Jonathan insists that he come into his presence (letter: 229). Meanwhile, several villages in Galilee (Japha/Japhia, Sepphoris, Asochis) make it known to Jonathan and his companions "that none should induce them to alter their determination to have Josephus for their

general" (231). Flavius Josephus comes out of Cabul, retires to Jotapata and writes another letter (235) in which he agrees to meet with the delegation.

The conference took place in the village of Gabaroth (242–265) after Flavius Josephus had prepared a number of strategies in several points of Galilee (236–241). The whole process of the conference ended in a spectacular acceptance of the leadership of Flavius Josephus by the Galilaeans: "they all greeted me with acclamations, calling me the benefactor and saviour of their country" (244), and "the Galilaeans raised a shout as hearty as their loyalty for me, their general" (250), and "I was hailed with encomiums and expressions of gratitude for my services as commander" (251). In his speech at the assembly, Flavius Josephus speaks of his "perfect dignity, perfect integrity" (258), and is finally proclaimed "benefactor and saviour" (259). At the end, Flavius Josephus forgives the commissioners for offenses toward him, and, seeing the violent reaction of the multitude against the members of the delegation (260–264), orders the departure for Sogane, convinced that "by this manoeuvre I guarded myself against the imputation of initiating a civil war" (265). Flavius Josephus sends a delegation to Jerusalem (266–270) to obtain his confirmation as leader of Galilee and the withdrawal of Jonathan and his colleagues.

Nevertheless, while waiting for an answer from Jerusalem, Jonathan's delegation promotes the rebellion of Tiberias against Flavius Josephus (271–279 = *Bellum* 2.632–646), who unexpectedly presents himself in the city (280–293), where he will be accused of unlawful use of public funds (294–301), of seeking "to make himself a despot and gaining a position of absolute power by deceitful speeches to the people of Galilee" (303); this provokes a violent attack, from which he emerges unhurt (301: "and quickly the providence of God cooperated to save me"), to take refuge in Tarichaea—"I . . . beyond of all expectation, came safe out of this perilous situation" (304)—and pacify the Galilean leaders, who were asking him to draw up his troops against John of Gischala and Jonathan the delegate (304–308).

5.3. *The Hero Reinstated*

Flavius Josephus is reinstated in his responsibilities, since the embassy sent to Jerusalem takes with it "letters, whereby the leading men of Jerusalem, at the urgent request of the people, confirmed me in my command of Galilee, and ordered Jonathan and his colleagues to return home forthwith" (310). At Arbela, Flavius Josephus summons the dele-

gates of the Galileans and tells them of "the ratification of my appointment as governor of their province, and of the written orders to my rivals to quit" (312). Yet his opponents, John of Gischala, the councilors of Tiberias and those in charge of Gabara, decide to send other messengers to Jerusalem (313–314) accusing Flavius Josephus "before the people of maladministration of the province of Galilee" (315). At the end of an endless number of vicissitudes, Flavius Josephus attacks and reduces Tiberias, whose inhabitants end up imploring his pardon (317–335).

Conclusion

Flavius Josephus acted alone and was mistrusted in the face of a versatile people, which had to be led with intelligence by someone anticipating their plans (88, 107), checking John of Gischala (70–76, 85–92, 101, 122–123, 234 ff., 292–293, 301–308, 313–316), foreseeing intentions and dangers (72, 206–207, 248, 283), and preparing strategies (138–139, 223–225, 318–320, 324–330), totally convinced of his own integrity (79–80), with greatness of spirit (82, 97–103, 210–212, 262–265, 304–308) and under divine protection (123, 138, 301).[60]

6. *Documentary Excursus (Vita 336–367)*

6.1. *Justus of Tiberias*[61]

Flavius Josephus now states the controversial points of his actions, indicating particularly the sources he has used for his *Bellum Iudaicum*, his being the most important visual testimony, as well as the ὑπομνήματα of Vespasian and Titus, adding the evidence of approval of King Agrippa II, being under the obligation to combat the work of Justus of Tiberias, a rival and false historian, since, despite having been witness to the facts, he distorts their veracity. In addition, he has to face:

> others who, while professing to write history, care little for truth, and, either from spite or partiality, have no scruples about falsehood. The procedure of such persons resembles indeed that of forgers of contracts, but, having no corresponding penalty to fear, they can afford to disdain veracity.

[60] Brottier, "Flavius Josèphe," 77–87.

[61] See A. Barzanò, "Giusto di Tiberiade," *ANRW* 2.20.1 (Berlin, 1987), 337–358.

> Justus, for instance, having taken upon himself to record the history of this war, has, in order to gain credit for industrious research, *not only maligned me, but even failed to tell the truth about his native place.*
>
> Being, therefore, now compelled *to defend myself against these false allegations*, I shall allude to matters about which I have hitherto kept silence. (336–338)

This digression is the αἰτίον which has motivated the writing of the *Vita*: Flavius Josephus has to justify his actions fighting these false allegations against him (338) that appear in the work of Justus of Tiberias, written when king Agrippa II (whose secretary he was)[62] had already died (AD 92).

The thesis of this excursus, directly expressed, is based on proving the culpability of Justus in the uprising of Tiberias against Rome (340–344; even Justus was imprisoned [343]), and Flavius Josephus takes as bibliography the war *commentarii* by Vespasian (342). Flavius Josephus states that Sepphoris remained loyal to the Romans (346–348), while Tiberias carried on being anti-Roman and could have been destroyed by Vespasian if he had not heeded King Agrippa's intercession (349–352) and attacks by saying: "the responsibility therefore rests not with me, but with you, Tiberians, and your passions for war" (352). Justus has not been loyal to King Agrippa (355–356) and has falsified his history about the events at Jotapata (357). What is more, Flavius Josephus accuses Justus of not having written trustworthily about the events in Jerusalem and Galilee, because he had not been there (357), neither had he read the ὑπομνήματα written by Titus himself (358). He further denounces his lack of honesty for not publishing his works while the emperors Vespasian and Titus, and King Agrippa and his family, were still alive, "persons thoroughly conversant with Hellenic culture" (359, 357–360).

6.2. *Flavius Josephus: Apologia*

On the contrary, Flavius Josephus *had* presented his books to the emperors, "when the events had hardly passed out of sight, conscious as I was that I had preserved the true story" (361), and to King Agrippa and to others who had taken part (362), and even Titus gave his *imprimatur* to his books about the war, so that they be "the sole authority from which

[62] Mason, "An Essay in Character," 31–77 (here, 41–42).

the world learn the facts" (363), and King Agrippa wrote 62 letters—two of which Flavius Josephus inserts straight afterward (364–366)—in which the veracity of his *History* is confirmed (367). Indeed, Agrippa "on the completion of my *History*, not in flattery, which was contrary to his nature, nor yet, as you no doubt will say, in irony, for he was far above such malignity, but in all sincerity, he, in common with all readers of my volumes, bore witness to their accuracy" (367).

7. *Strategy as a Deterrent Discourse*

To confirm all that had been said, Flavius Josephus takes up the narrative thread again after the events in Tiberias (318–335) and focuses now on the initial period of hostilities between Jews and Romans (368–413), summarizing three of his interventions:

a. *Flavius Josephus Disarms John of Gischala*
Flavius Josephus decides to take measures against John of Gischala: to find out the names of his followers, threaten them, and promise them safety if they change sides; four thousand deserted, and fifteen thousand foreigners stayed (368–372).

b. *Flavius Josephus Saves Sepphoris*
Sepphoris rose up in arms and asked Cestius Gallus, governor of Syria, for help, but Flavius Josephus goes ahead and takes the city by storm. The Galileans see the opportunity to destroy the detested Sepphoris, take it and set it on fire. Flavius Josephus, by way of stratagem, spreads the word that the Romans had occupied part of the city, something that frightens the Galileans and they flee, especially on seeing Flavius Josephus, their general, do the same (373–380).

c. *Flavius Josephus Saves Tiberias*
The identical situation happened in Tiberias, when the city asked King Agrippa for military help. The Galileans accused the Tiberians of betraying the region's independence. Flavius Josephus, who is in Asochis, pacifies them: for the second time Tiberias was saved "by my adroitness and considerate forethought" (381–389, 389).

8. *Start of the Great War*

However, Flavius Josephus must reform his pacifist stance, and, whether in accordance with or against his personal political vision, takes up

arms against the Romans. We do not possess reasonable proofs for this apparent change of attitude, but the truth is that he fights against the pro-Roman Jews and against the Romans themselves. Flavius Josephus had already passed sentence on the situation of Galilee in the *Bellum*: "Galilee from end to end became a scene of fire and blood; from no misery, no calamity was it exempt; the one refuge for the hunted inhabitants was in the cities fortified by Josephus" (3.63).

8.1. *A Changing Fortune*

The inhabitants of Tiberias decided not to rebel against Rome and stay on King Agrippa II's side—at that time they did not form part of his kingdom—but Justus of Tiberias, in the hope of obtaining the government of Galilee (391), persuaded them to take up arms. Nevertheless, Justus, seeing that Flavius Josephus would not tolerate it, changed tactics and entered into negotiations with the king (390–393).

Sepphoris, too, asks Cestius Gallus for protection, but Flavius Josephus attacks it at night and seizes a large part of the city, which he has to abandon eventually (*Bellum* 3.61–62). A few days later, Flavius Josephus will be defeated by the Roman cavalry (394–397). Josephus still had to face Agrippa's troops under the command of Sulla, their captain, and won; but "by some evil genius" (403) Josephus's horse fell and he suffered an accident. Sulla's troops took advantage of the incident but did not obtain any success (398–406).

8.2. *Vespasian, in the Field of Battle (Spring AD 67)*

Soon after this Vespasian arrives in Tyre in the company of King Agrippa, calms the protests of the inhabitants against the king, and on arriving at Ptolemais receives claims of indignation against Justus of Tiberias, whom he sentences to death, but Agrippa commutes that penalty to one of imprisonment (407–410; events already detailed in 343).

At this point, the internal discourse of the *Vita* ends.

The events making up the Great War starting at that moment are in fact summarized in a handful of paragraphs (411–413), as the military events managed by Flavius Josephus are found to be narrated in the *Bellum Iudaicum* (Book 3). The following is a synopsis of them:

Bellum Iudaicum	*Vita*
3.128–131: Flavius Josephus flees from Garis upon the arrival of the Romans and seeks refuge in Tiberias. 3.141–288: Josephus enters Jotapata (May–June AD 67), Vespasian sieges, blocks (Josephus contemplates a fight: 193–212, and sets fire to the Roman siege-engines: 222–239) and invests it (June–July 8, AD 67). Vespasian considers Flavius Josephus "the most sagacious of his enemies" (144). 3.316–391: Jotapata falls (Josephus, in a cave: 340–343; invited to surrender: 344–360; harangues his companions, escapes [391: "should one say by fortune or by the providence of God?"]; and surrenders to the Romans: 361–390; remains alive: 391). 3.392–408: Josephus before Vespasian; "some exulting at his capture, some threatening … clamoured for the punishment of their enemy. But some—those close beside him—recalled his exploits and marvelled at such reversal of fortune … Titus in particular was specially touched by the fortitude of Josephus under misfortunes and by pity for his youth—he had been born in AD 37. As he recalled the combatant of yesterday and saw him now a prisoner … and the general instability of human affairs." Josephus predicts his accession as emperor: "You will be Caesar, Vespasian, you will be emperor, you and your son here" (401; June 67); and remains prisoner.	Vespasian reaches Sepphoris (411). "Of the manner of his arrival and of his first engagement with me in the neighbourhood of the village of Garis; of my withdrawal from there to Jotapata and my conduct during the siege of that place; of my capture, imprisonment and subsequent liberation; of my conduct throughout the whole campaign and at the siege of Jerusalem, I have given a detailed description in my books on the *Jewish War*" (412). 413: Flavius Josephus confesses the need to say about himself what has not been told in the *Bellum*: "it is, however, I think, incumbent upon me now to append an account of such particulars of my life as were not recorded in my earlier work." He adds: "after the siege of Jotapata I was in the hands of the Romans and was kept under guard, while receiving every attention. Vespasian showed in many ways the honour in which he held me" (414).

9. *The Philology of the 'I'*

Having reached this point, it is highly illustrative of Flavius Josephus' personality to summarize the assessment of the variability of his actions—made by himself—on the basis of a selective philological analysis, with the intention of weighing as much as possible his mental framework. The points are sufficiently eloquent in themselves and need no further explanation: "there I understood revolutionary movements already on foot"

(17), "I earnestly and insistently sought to dissuade them" (19), "I now feared that my incessant reiteration of this warning would bring me into odium" (20), "I, however, entirely allayed their fears" (31), "I told them that I and my associates had been commissioned by the Jerusalem assembly" (65), "I was extremely indignant" (68), "I soon discovered that he [John of Gischala] was eager for revolution and ambitious of obtaining command" (70), "detecting his ultimate design and present intentions … as the authority entrusted to me by the Jerusalem authorities extended to that district" (72), "I tried, and obtained their approbation of the sentences which I pronounced" (79), "I was now about thirty years old … it is hard, especially in a position of high authority, to escape the calumnies of envy" (80), "the affection and loyalty towards me of the people of Galilee" (84), "my speedy action, however, thwarted their plans" (88), "whom … I had appointed governor of Tiberias" (89), "I dismissed my bodyguard, except one man whom I retained along with ten soldiers" (92), "I urged them not to be so hasty in revolting" (92), "I was horrified at the thought of opening a civil war, and considered that the quarrel should not go further than verbal remonstrances … I appeased the anger of the Galilaeans" (100), "I begged and entreated them to desist" (103).

10. *Flowering Decline*

Two years go by and the *Bellum* offers some biographical details from after May, AD 69: Vespasian, aided by good fortune and assisted by divine providence (4.622: "Vespasian was led to think that divine providence had assisted him to grasp the empire and that some just destiny had placed the sovereignty of the world within his hands"), recalls that his Jewish prisoner had foretold his ascension to the throne, and "calling for Josephus, he ordered him to be liberated" (4.626). The problems of the succession to power in Rome attract the attention of Vespasian, who entrusts the Jewish war to his son Titus (630–663) and disappears from the scene in Judaea.

Titus, then, during the hostilities against Jerusalem (*Bellum* 5), will send Flavius Josephus to ask the Jews for their surrender (5.362–420: "God was on the Roman side;" 5.368: "my belief, therefore, is that the Deity has fled from the holy places and taken His stand on the side of those with whom you are now at war" [5.412]). This will be repeated some time later (August 70; 6.96–110) and will obtain the defection of Jewish nobles. Books 6 and 7 of the *Bellum* will recount the end of Jerusalem and of Masada.

III. Third Part. Last Sketches in the Vita (Vita 414–430)

1. *Misfortunes and Survival*

The *Vita* has now fulfilled its aim—to prove the truth of the deeds prior to the Great War in which Flavius Josephus took some important political decisions, when faced with the instability of the various cities of the Galilee, his opponents and the rebels. All that remains now is to annotate some details of Flavius Josephus' private life: after AD 67, *Vita* 414: on the advice of Vespasian, he marries a prisoner from Caesarea; *Vita* 415: divorce + trip to Alexandria + marriage to an Alexandrian; year AD 70: *Vita* 416–418: he is present at the fall of Jerusalem; Titus allows him to share in the war booty; *Vita* 419–421: saves prisoners and those crucified known to him, by the grace of Titus; *Vita* 422–425: honored by Vespasian (in Rome), who grants him Roman citizenship and assigns him an annuity (423)—his privileged position causes envy, which he overcomes "by the providence of God" (425); *Vita* 426–428: divorce (three children); gets married to a Jewish woman from Crete (two children).

2. *Epilogues*

The following is a synopsis of the epilogues and the lineal architecture of the Flavian work:

Bellum Iudaicum	*Antiquitates Iudaicae*	*Vita*
7.454–455: "Here we close the history, which we promised to relate with perfect accuracy for the information of those who wish to learn how this war was waged by the Romans against the Jews. Of its style my readers must be left to judge; but, as concerning truth, I would not hesitate boldly to assert that, throughout the entire narrative, this has been my single aim."	20.266: allows to see the *Vita* as an appendix to the *Antiquitates*.	428–429: death of Vespasian; honored by Titus, Domitian, and empress Domitia. 430: "Such are the events of my whole life; from them let others judge as they will of my character."

Bellum Iudaicum	*Antiquitates Iudaicae*	*Vita*
The *Bellum Iudaicum* starts from the invasion of Judea by Antioch (IV) Epiphanes (in 170 BC) up to the succession of Roman governors (Books 1–2) and the great Judeo-Roman war (AD 63–73; Books 3–7).	The *Antiquitates* recounts the history of the Jewish people from the beginning of hostilities (AD 63), the education ("for my compatriots admit that in our Jewish learning I far excel them") and studies of Flavius Josephus (20.263).	The *Vita* recounts selectively a historical period of six months, (AD 66–67) prior to the war. It ends with the account of his captivity (year 67), of his presence in Jerusalem (year 70), and of news of his life in Rome.

Final Appraisal

Even if autobiography *stricto sensu* was not a literary genre in classical antiquity, the *commentarii* and the other writings of a personal nature that developed around the ἦθος ("physical or mental space to which one is accustomed"), with the aim of letting the account rest upon a rational and edifying basis constituted its beginnings: the personality, the character, the value, the factors of success and failure, and the mission of the individual were the determining factors of this "reviving oneself." The "autobiography" of Flavius Josephus is, without a doubt, an accurate rewriting of the Second Book of the *Bellum Iudaicum*, this time focusing on self-justification with regard to three motives: John of Gischala, ambitious for power, and therefore a competitor; the internal, self-destructive tensions of the Jewish people; and Justus of Tiberias, a minor political leader, but above all the author of a history that falsifies the hostilities, a work that has not come down to us.

1. *"Such Are the Events of My Whole Life" (Vita 430)*

With these words, Flavius Josephus concludes the *Vita* that he had promised he would write (*Ant.* 20.266), leaving judgment of it in the hands of his readers—"from them let others judge as they will of my character" (430)—in the hope of provoking admiration for his honest course of action, although he knew that his history would not be accepted, as it is not exempt from ambiguities between what are his general and his specific actions. We have said that the *Vita* does not, in itself, reproduce the life of Flavius Josephus, regardless of his statement "such are the events of my whole life." It was a complement to the *Antiquitates* and even a specification of his political stances as gathered in the *Bellum Iudaicum*.

The *Vita*, therefore, written when the author was fifty-six years of age, some fourteen years after the writing of the *Bellum Iudaicum*, extols his person: a child prodigy, a young man of good training who, when he is an adult, escapes a number of situations even with risk to his life; skillful commander who foresees events and is under divine protection. Those are the traits of a true hero.[63] On the opposite side we find his adversaries and part of the Jewish people.

2. *Flavius Josephus, a Hellenizing Jew*

Flavius Josephus accepts the intervention of intangible powers, sometimes antagonistic to man, that mingle in human activities and in the history of peoples. Flavius Josephus will make every effort possible to synchronize mysterious events, to confront implacable reality and to preserve his religious convictions,[64] with the aim of bringing about the understanding of his character. Ἀνάγκη, therefore, has been the determining factor that has wiped away the Jews' ability to reason before starting the war (27) and the one leading them to suffer the punishment (171). The victory of the Romans is not due to the Romans themselves, but to a higher cause, as Flavius Josephus will put in the mouth of Eleazar at the end of the *Bellum*: "it is by God's will and of necessity that we are to die … for it was not their [the Romans'] might that brought these things to pass, but the intervention of some more powerful cause has afforded them the semblance of victory" (*Bellum* 7.358 and 360), and he will even state that "the need for this [to die] is of God's sending, the reverse of this is the Romans' desire, and their fear is lest a single one of us should die before capture" (*Bellum* 7.387). That is to say, and even to insist, that the Romans—or better still, the powerful Roman Empire—were not the actors of the war, but rather something supersensible that has managed it so well. The victory of the Romans was rather the result of an illusion, as it is exclusively based on a sense of the presumption of victory. Moreover,

[63] In the *Bellum* (3.396–408), Josephus presents himself even as a prophet, and he will never forget that he owes his life to the Flavians, but he will also recall the dangers he went through (*Vita* 416; *Bellum* 7.443–448).

[64] See Francesco Trisoglio, "L'intervento divino delle vicende umane dalla storiografia classica greca a Flavio Giuseppe e ad Eusebio di Cesarea," *ANRW* 2.21.2 (Berlin, 1984), 977–1104; Pere Villalba i Varneda, *The Historical Method of Flavius Josephus* (Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des Hellenistischen Judentums) 19 (Leiden, 1986), 40–60.

we should remember that the Romans had feared not being able to beat the Jews: history is not based on opinions, but on the principles relating to the situation.

Finally, other concepts such as ἀλάστωρ, αὐτόματος, δαίμων (*Vita* 402), δεισιδαιμονία, τὸ χρεών, τύχη (*Vita* 142, 180, 417, 419)—all present in the Flavian works—show that Flavius Josephus invokes religious and esoteric concepts to justify the succession of events, which he submits to the limits of his opinion with no intention of reasoning them out. This whole set of concepts inherited from Hellenism makes a personality such as that of Flavius Josephus possible, a character capable of cohabitating with disparate mental structures, of organizing his life in a Roman environment, and of maintaining a stoic spirit; behavior with schizophrenic touches, seen from our historical perspective, which will surely be guilty of anachronism. Nevertheless, this polyhedral co-causality of human becoming is present throughout the Flavian work, and this contributes to generating in our author a great self-esteem as part of his destiny. He was predestined—or so it would seem.

3. *The Flavian Element in Flavius Josephus*

In the last analysis, despite the fact that the human being named Flavius Josephus may offer many facets worthy of criticism, we should still have to thank him for a peculiar nuance worthy of note. Flavius Josephus does not simply fight against his internal enemies, his fellow countrymen, even mounting a defense of his good behavior throughout the *Vita*; he does not simply confront the Romans at first in order to stumble before them later, but he also disseminates a subliminal message to his readers. So, Flavius Josephus presents himself in a subtle way as a character worthy of imitation after having created around him an exemplary, essentially noble environment—something that transcends the perspectives of the Pharisee and priest who limits himself to the strict interpretation of Jewish law; he is able to evoke, even if tangentially, a *speculum principum* of sorts. A purportedly new style has been born for a presumed new society amidst an impossible balance between heritage and modernity—all based on the evidence of some hitherto unheard of signs of the times.

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CHAPTER TEN

THE SECOND AND THIRD CENTURY

Richard Westall and Frederick Brenk*

Introduction

The age of the Antonines and Severans, broadly defined as extending from the accession of Nerva to the imperial throne to the fall of Severus Alexander from power (AD 96–235), is traditionally viewed as the golden age of imperial Rome.[1] The reasons for this particular view of history are variegated and multiple. It is of no little interest that this view can be traced back, in part, to the vision that contemporaries themselves had of the period in which they lived.[2] Whatever their convictions, senators and authors such as Pliny the Younger and Cornelius Tacitus lauded the felicity that obtained under a series of emperors who came to the throne mature in years and capable of avoiding the worst errors of youth and

* The authors would like to take this occasion to thank Prof. Gabriele Marasco for his kind invitation to contribute to this project and the staff at Brill for their timely assistance in helping to bring it to a close. An especial note of thanks is also owed to Prof. Kai Brodersen for his sharing with us the text of his forthcoming piece on the Appianos sarcophagus (*IGUR* 1700). Lastly, we would also like to note that collaboration on the chapter has been very cordial and rewarding for both of us.

[1] There is no English-speaking reader who will not be acquainted with the classic, somewhat more restricted enunciation of this view in 1776 by Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. D. Womersley (London, 1994), 1.103. The view is exquisitely literary in derivation but finds plentiful corroboration within the material record.

[2] Most prominent amongst these is Aelius Aristides' speech in praise of Rome, *Oratio* 26, to which a vast modern literature has been dedicated. For an introduction to the literature and the issues involved, see now F. Fontanella, "The Encomium on Rome as a Response to Polybius' Doubts About the Roman Empire," in *Aelius Aristides between Greece, Rome, and the Gods*, eds. W.V. Harris and B. Holmes (Leiden, 2008), 203–216; R. Laurent, *Eloges de Rome* (Paris, 2001), introduction; C. Behr, "Studies on the Biography of Aelius Aristides," *ANRW* 2.34.2 (Berlin, 1993), 1140. The date of delivery is established by R. Klein, "Zur Datierung der Romrede des Aelius Aristides," *Historia* 30 (1981), 337. Also worth consulting, for the perspective of the historian of imperial Rome, are C. Wells, *The Roman Empire* (London, 1992), 220–226; A. Schiavone, *La storia spezzata. Roma antica e Occidente moderno* (Rome, 1996), 5–11.

a monarchy based upon filial descent.[3] Establishing a new dynasty, Septimius Severus sought to hide that fact and to secure his own hold on power through fictive continuation of that of the Antonines.[4] Consequently, within an age noted for *felicitas temporum*, it might be thought that circumstances limited the need for polemic, with an accompanying, sensible decrease in political autobiography.

Close inspection of the literary remains, however, reveals that such was not the case. Rather, there are five instances discernible amidst the fragments. Four of these were produced by or in the name of emperors—Trajan (AD 98–117), Hadrian (117–138), Septimius Severus (193–211), and Caracalla (211–217)—who were faced with the menace of civil war or sought to secure their hold upon power in the wake of victory and civil bloodshed. The fifth was the confident production of a provincial—the sophist Appian of Alexandria—so dedicated to the idea of imperial Rome that he wrote an innovative history of the genesis and course of events under the empire. Together they represent a continuing tradition of autobiographical literature in various subgenres of history, including not only the *commentarius* (Trajan and Caracalla) but also the, possibly, epistolary autobiography (Hadrian) and the *apologia* (Appian, Septimius Severus).[5] Naturally, earlier models such as those furnished by Julius Caesar, Augustus, and, perhaps, Flavius Josephus can be perceived to have influenced these polemical portrayals of recent history. As will be seen in what follows, the times were not so felicitous and life was far more interesting than is often believed.

1. Trajan

Trajan's account of his conquest of Dacia and destruction of the kingdom of Decebalus, achieved through two separate wars conducted in the years 101–102 and 105–106, was of necessity autobiographical in nature. However, it was far too restricted in temporal coverage and too generous in terms of protagonists other than Trajan to be deemed a work *De*

[3] Thus, for example, Plin., *Pan.* 74.1, 4; Tac., *Agr.* 3.1–3.

[4] See sections 4 and 5 below, for Severus' evolving presentation of himself and his older son Caracalla.

[5] As will emerge in the following discussion, however, it would be an egregious mistake to think that these works can be understood only from the vantage point of one particular subgenre. For example, when published rather than merely maintained for ordinary administrative purposes, *commentarii* have distinct features in common with letters.

uita sua. Concerned only with the emperor's martial exploits in those wars and the achievements of his soldiers as they reduced the formerly independent neighbor to the status of ally and then made a province of the area, this account cannot have dealt with the personal life or origins of Trajan, nor even the other public concerns faced in the years in question. As is indicated by the presumed title [*Bella*] *Dacica*,[6] this work possessed a unity that derived from its specific temporal and geographical focus. Albeit autobiographical insofar as Trajan wrote of himself as supreme commander of the first and second Dacian wars, the [*Bella*] *Dacica* related the narrative of Roman expansion in the lower basin of the Danube against a people that had intermittently been at peace with and hostile to the Romans since the late Republic.[7] Indeed, Trajan in his conquest of Dacia would seem to have been emulating Julius Caesar and the decision to write and publish the [*Bella*] *Dacica* was of a piece with this aim.[8] At the same time, through this war and his account of it, Trajan was also emulating all three members of the Flavian dynasty. Vespasian and his elder son Titus had published *Commentarii de Bello Iudaico* to commemorate their reconquest of Judaea; Domitian, the younger son, had played the part of the *imperator* by declaring war upon the Dacians and accepting triumphs for victories won by his generals.

The sole fragment of Trajan's narrative relating the difficult years of warfare and conquest of Dacia is unprepossessing in appearance.

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[6] The title is transmitted as *Dacica* in the grammatical work of Priscian (cited below). But this substantival use of an adjective in the neuter plural is typical of the titles of Greek books (e.g., the *Getica* composed by Trajan's physician, T. Statilius Crito), rather than of Latin works. As a result, it has been proposed that the work must have been entitled [*Bellum*] *Dacicum*; R.G. Lewis, "Imperial Autobiography, Augustus to Hadrian," *ANRW* 2.34.1 (1993), 634. Yet, despite the analogy with the *commentarii* of Caesar and his anonymous continuators and of Vespasian and Titus, two considerations suggest that the plural form is best maintained. First, the deformation of *Bella Dacica* into merely *Dacica* is more economical than that required by *Bellum Dacicum*, and hence more likely. Secondly, there were effectively two separate conflicts, or *bella*.

[7] For a survey of relations between the Romans and the Dacians, see now A.S. Stefan, *Les guerres daciques de Domitien et de Trajan. Architecture militaire, topographie, images et histoire*, *CEFR* 353 (Rome, 2005), 375–499; I.A. Oltean, *Dacia. Landscape, Colonisation, Romanisation* (London, 2007), 41–53. As regards the details of Trajan's two Dacian wars, on the other hand, see K. Strobel, *Untersuchungen zu den Dakerkriegen Trajans. Studien zur Geschichte des mittleren und unteren Donauraumes in der Hohen Kaiserzeit* (Bonn, 1984); cf. Stefan, *Les guerres daciques*, 501–693; Oltean, *Dacia*, 53–58. Upon the successful conclusion of the first Dacian war in 102, Trajan assumed the title *Dacicus* to commemorate his successes; D. Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle. Grundzüge einer römischen Kaiserchronologie*, (Darmstadt, 1996^2), 123.

[8] Cf. J. Malitz, "Caesars Partherkrieg," *Historia* 33 (1984), 21–59, here 51.

Occurring in the form of a citation made by the late antique grammarian Priscian (6.13, p. 205 = *HRR*^{2}, 2.117 F1), the fragment appears thus:

> *Traianus in I Dacicorum: inde Berzobim, deinde Aizi processimus.*
>
> Trajan in the first book of the [*Bella*] *Dacica* writes: Then we made our way to Berzobis and thereafter to Aizi.

The curious form of what should have been an accusative caught the grammarian's eye. Only for that reason was it thought worth his while to cite a sentence indicating Roman progression through the countryside early in the first of Trajan's two campaigns. The resulting line is miserably little when account is taken of the fact that this *testimonium* indicates that Trajan's [*Bella*] *Dacica* consisted of at least two books. In view of the likelihood that each book consisted of the equivalent of at least twenty OCT pages or six hundred forty lines, then this fragment will represent 0.0078 percent of that lost work at best. Manifestly, the temptation to read too much into the little that survives must be resisted.[9]

Three items about this fragment immediately capture the reader's attention. First and foremost, there is the formulaic nature of the language. Verbal disposition makes for a narrative that is pellucid: (adverb) + (accusative) + (verb). Clear sign-posting, which is reinforced by the adverbial ending *-de*, and parallel structure inform "*inde Berzobim*, *deinde Aizi*." Secondly, through use of the invariable form *Aizi* where we might have expected the accusative *Aizim*, there is a conscious attempt to reflect local linguistic practice.[10] As a result, there is avoidance of the pedestrian effect that would have resulted from repetition of the accusative ending *-im*. Despite the rarity of this phenomenon, the invariable form *Aizi* has parallels in "barbarian" proper names such as that of *Iliturgi* for a community within the Iberian peninsula.[11] Third and last, there is the noticeable reliance upon asyndeton. Within an author of a work written during the height of Silver Latin, we should surely have expected the use of a conjunction, such as *et* or *ac* in front of the adverb

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[9] Albeit within a different context, it may be salutary to reflect upon a remark made by Mark Twain, "Chapters from My Autobiography," *North American Review* (Sept. 7, 1906): "Figures often beguile me, particularly when I have the arranging of them myself; in which case the remark attributed to Disraeli would often apply with justice and force: 'There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics.'"

[10] It is to be remarked, however, that this interpretation assumes that the form *Aizi* is not merely an error of transmission. That assumption underlies Priscian's discussion, and here too is held to be valid.

[11] Livy 23.48: *Iliturgi oppidum oppugnabatur*. This passage is duly remarked by Priscian in the discussion that follows his citation of Trajan.

deinde. This asyndeton, however, is typical of the "breathless" style of military reports. Language was stripped to its bare essentials; words not deemed functional might be omitted.

The fragment also serves to remind us of a fundamental fact of life within the military of the late Republic and early Principate: mobility. Caesar's *commentarii* are filled with accounts of battles and skirmishes. Nonetheless, a significant proportion of the narrative of those *commentarii* is also concerned with the movement of troops. A similar situation can be discerned in items such as Tacitus' account of the activities of Cn. Domitius Corbulo in the East in the 50s AD.[12] Between the mid-third century BC and the mid-second AD, Roman legions and auxiliaries were highly mobile. This surviving fragment from Trajan's [*Bella*] *Dacica* shows the emperor and his army advancing down the Danube valley and along the road leading from Viminacium to Tibiscum.[13] Such movements figure very little in the pictorial record provided by the frieze that adorns the Column of Trajan, for they lack the dramatic qualities of a battle scene as well as the hieratic potential of a sacrifice or harangue, but they were a standard feature of Roman military life in this period. Intimately associated with the military reforms that gave rise to the figure of the legionary of imperial Rome, C. Marius is reported to have affirmed on more than one occasion that a successful campaign consisted largely of marches and counter-marches, and battle was to be given only when the situation was markedly favorable to oneself or an encounter could not be postponed.[14] By contrast, the Column of Trajan focuses upon the construction of fortresses and similar actions that are complementary to this mobility on the part of the Roman army.

Still, despite their reliance upon scene types that were selected with a view of their visual impact, it seems likely that the bas-reliefs constituting the four hundred-foot-long frieze adorning the Column of Trajan depended in large part upon the [*Bella*] *Dacica* of Trajan. Two considerations render eminently probable the thesis that Trajan's literary work exerted influence upon this pictorial representation of recent history. For one thing, the [*Bella*] *Dacica* of Trajan were presumably published at

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[12] Tac., *Ann*. 15.10–17. It will occasion no surprise that Corbulo wrote a work *De uita sua*, for which see *HRR*^{2}, 2.99–101, and that Tacitus relies heavily upon this. For Tacitus' use, see E. Koestermann, *Cornelius Tacitus, Annalen, erläutert und mit einer Einleitung versehen* (Heidelberg, 1968), 4.189 *ad* 15.16.1.

[13] *RE* 1A (1894) col. 1132 s.v. "Aizisis" (W. Tomaschek); *RE* 3A (1897) col. 318 s.v. "Bersovia" (W. Tomaschek).

[14] Plut., *Mar*. 16 and 33.2.

the time of Trajan's Dacian triumph in 107, or very shortly thereafter.[15] Hence, the work will have appeared prior to the completion of the column, which is known to have been dedicated in 113.[16] In addition, since the column was flanked by both a Latin and a Greek library and it is likely that a copy of the [*Bella*] *Dacica* was housed within the former, the influence of the [*Bella*] *Dacica* upon the column seems assured.[17] However, it must be remembered that the bas-reliefs upon the column represent events from contemporary history. Therefore, other sources of information for the artists are not only possible, but also plausible. Aside from veterans and other possible oral sources, there were also other literary accounts in circulation. For example, Trajan's physician, T. Statilius Crito, wrote a work entitled *Getica*, in which he described Trajan's campaigns in Dacia.[18] Moreover, the temporal relationship between the visual images created for Trajan's Dacian triumph of 107 and the publication of the [*Bella*] *Dacica* is unknown. Hence, not even the presumed similarity of the layout of the bas-reliefs to a scroll is sufficient to demonstrate reliance upon Trajan's account of the conquest of Dacia.[19] Reliance seems probable, but is beyond demonstration on the basis of the surviving evidence.

The scenes constituting the frieze carved upon the Column of Trajan in all likelihood represent the highlights of the campaigns. They probably appeared in paintings carried on carts during the triumphal procession and may have been publicly exhibited afterwards. Designs would have been necessary both for the paintings and the enormous sculptural program. Ultimately, these designs as well as Trajan's [*Bella*] *Dacica* should go back to the log books (*commentarii*) jotted down during the campaigns. Probably Trajan himself gave some directions for the depictions.[20] He appears fifty times in the sculptures and his statue crowns the work.[21] As

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[15] Cf. H. Bardon, *Les empereurs et les lettres latines d'Auguste à Hadrien* (Paris, 1940), 342, and *La littérature latine inconnue* (Paris, 1956), 2.211.

[16] *Inscriptiones Italiae* 13.1.203; *CIL* 6.960.

[17] E.M. Steinby, ed., *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae* 2.348–356 s.v. "Forum Traiani" (J. Packer), here 353.

[18] *FGrHist* 2B.200.

[19] For this similarity, see F. Lepper and S. Frere, *Trajan's Column* (Gloucester, 1988), 25–26 and 209–210.

[20] On the column, see G. Koeppel, "The Column of Trajan: Narrative Technique and the Image of the Emperor," in *Sage and Emperor. Plutarch, Greek Intellectuals, and Roman Power in the Time of Trajan*, eds. P.A. Stadter and L. Van der Stockt (Leuven, 2002), 245–257; F. Coarelli, *The Column of Trajan* (Rome, 2000); M. Galinier, *La colonne de Trajan et les forums imperiaux*, *CEFR* 382 (Rome, 2007).

[21] According to Koeppel, Trajan, re-cut as Constantine, is the central figure in the two

the column exists today, it is difficult to distinguish Trajan from his staff and troops. But if the column was painted, he would have been identified by his scarlet cloak. Naturally, scene types recur, such as the *aduentus* in which the Dacians flee before the mounted Trajan, a scene indicating that the mere presence of the emperor sufficed to dismay the enemy and cast them into disarray.[22] Trajan's multiple appearances could be interpreted positively as a demonstration of his "hands-on" management of the war, closeness to the troops, and again, as an expression of the victory being due to the joint effort of general, staff, and troops.[23] His statue, on the other hand, surmounting the column, does seem megalomaniac, but not necessarily to his contemporaries. The colossal statue of Nero as Sol, or of Nero turned into Sol, was more imposing, but Trajan's on the column probably was the next most impressive. Moreover, most Romans would probably have forgotten that the *Colossus* had once represented Nero. Trajan's Column, being in the middle of his Forum, was also somewhat obscured from view. In any case, in the column we find expressions of humility, identification with his men, and the assertion of imperial *grandeur*. The last, like the *Commentary*, undoubtedly served as a precaution against *coups d'état*.

In his building projects outside Rome, Trajan acted with considerable tact. He distanced himself from Domitian's egomania and attendant greed as manifested by extravagant buildings, and instead vaunted constructions that linked his expansionist aims to the glory of Rome. Of all his constructions outside Rome, the imperial coinage only shows the Via Traiana, Trajan's bridge at Drobeta, and the harbor at Portus, but the Via Traiana appeared on coins of both high and low value, thus assuring a greater distribution. The public buildings and adornment of the cities were generally developed in collaboration with Roman officials and with the local elite, though more so with the officials. Milestones for his roads outside Italy often name the official who directed the construction, even if some of them referring to Trajan include the phrase *pecunia sua* (paid

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reliefs of the "Great Battle Frieze" reemployed in the inner part of Constantine's arch, and Hadrian appears twelve times in Trajan's arch at Beneventum (246).

[22] Koeppel, "The Column of Trajan," 246.

[23] For the close relationship of the column to the events of the war as related by Cassius Dio, see esp. J. Bennett, *Trajan, Optimus Princeps. A Life and Times* (London, 1997), 85–104, 214–218. J. Trimble, "Visibility and Viewing on the Severan Marble Plan," in *Severan Culture*, eds. S. Swain, S. Harrison, and J. Elsner (Cambridge, 2007), 368–384, observes similarities between the Severan Marble Plan and Trajan's Column: both were designed to overwhelm the spectator with minuscule veristic detail (374).

for at his own expense). All in all, Trajan seems to have desired to create for himself an image as the *optimus princeps* (the perfect ruler) even while holding real monarchical power, to that end occasionally to identify himself closely with the Senate.[24] These themes undoubtedly appeared in his account of the Dacian wars.

Still, if there is one area in which the column's decoration may cast light upon the lost [*Bella*] *Dacica* of Trajan, then it is the question of the extent of that work. As remarked above, the citation by Priscian demonstrates that there was more than one book. If there was a first book, then of necessity there existed a second book at the very least. But the campaigns occurred over the course of four years: 101–102 and 105–106. It seems natural to inquire whether Trajan's [*Bella*] *Dacica* consisted of two, four, or an even larger number of books.[25] Only one clearly marked temporal division occurs within the visual narrative offered by the bas-reliefs: the winged victory that writes upon a shield (scene 53).[26] This scene comes at the very end of the first Dacian war, and the implicit meaning of the act represented allows viewers to recognize a significant temporal hiatus. When the viewer is consciously searching for temporal markers within the two wars, by contrast, it is impossible to discern a further subdivision into years that is so clear-cut.[27] Divisions between individual scenes cannot be distinguished from divisions between campaigning seasons within a given war. If the influence of the [*Bella*] *Dacica* upon the column's decoration be accepted, then it would appear that the [*Bella*] *Dacica* consisted of only two books, with one apiece for each of the two wars. That runs counter to the practice of Caesar when he wrote his *commentarii* on the conquest of Gaul, but it does find a parallel in the conclusion written by A. Hirtius for the *Bellum Gallicum*.[28]

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[24] M.T. Boatwright, "Trajan Outside Rome: Construction and Embellishment in Italy and in the Provinces," in *Sage and Emperor*, 259–278, esp. 263 and 269–270.

[25] Cf. Lewis, "Imperial Autobiography," 638: "perhaps four or five, if there was one for each year's campaigning." Possibly, but the latter figure seems to depend upon the concept of a book dedicated to the period intervening between the first and second Dacian war. There is little to recommend such a hypothesis. Not only would the events of the intervening period not merit detailed narration within the context of a work dedicated to the Dacian wars, but *commentarii* dealing with that period would not have been composed by Trajan and would not have contributed to his image as a general.

[26] Lepper and Frere, *Trajan's Column*, 121–122.

[27] As an instance of consequent interpretative difficulties, see, e.g., Lepper and Frere, *Trajan's Column*, 86.

[28] Hirt., *BGall*. 8.48.10: *scio Caesarem singulorum annorum singulos commentarios confecisse*. Indeed, one consequence has been that there are those who believe—erroneously—that the first two books of the *Bellum Civile* were originally one.

The use that Trajan makes of the first person plural form in the sole fragment that survives runs counter to typical Caesarian usage. Without fail Caesar writes of himself in the third person singular when it is a matter of Caesar the historical agent. Only when referring to himself as an author does Caesar permit himself use of the first person, then employing only the plural form.[29] It is to be noted that such intertextual, first person references are extremely infrequent. Never does Caesar use the first person plural to indicate an action within the narrative, such as movement between two places.[30] It is to be assumed from Trajan's sentence, on the other hand, that the books of the [*Bella*] *Dacica* were replete with language emphasizing the protagonism of their purported author. The precise weight to be attributed to this choice will nevertheless remain uncertain. For M. Cicero's letter to the enate describing his actions as governor in Cilicia in 51–50 BC appears to provide a more reliable guide to the language typical of *commentarii*. In that letter Cicero consistently employs the firstperson singular throughout his narrative.[31] Did Trajan employ the first person plural in order to emphasize identity with his soldiers? Or are we faced here with an example of the "majestic plural"? Whatever the eventual answer, the result was a personalized history such as might be expected of autobiography written by the *optimus princeps*.[32]

By general consensus not a *littérateur*, the *optimus princeps* Trajan can hardly be seen as having written the [*Bella*] *Dacica* on his own. A fondness for wine and boys may not be uncongenial to composition of a literary work, but the emperor is explicitly recorded as not having been

[29] E.g., Caes., *BGall.* 4.4.1 (*quos supra diximus*); 7.37.1 (*cui magistratum adiudicatum a Caesare demonstrauimus*); *BCiv.* 1.31.2 (*ut supra demonstrauimus*); cf. Hirt., *BGall.* 8.47.2 (*quam supra commemoraui*). It is to be added that Caesar does, however, also make use of impersonal constructions in order to interject authorial notes (e.g., Caes., *BCiv.* 1.39.1: *ut supra demonstratum est*).

[30] Of the twenty-one forms of *procedo* employed in fifty-two instances within the Caesarian corpus, there is not a single instance of a first person plural form. Rather, usage is restricted to the third person plural and singular and on two occasions to the impersonal construction. For details, see C.M. Birch, *Concordantia et Index Caesaris* (Hildesheim, 1989), 2.1156.

[31] For a complete list of such letters by Cicero and others, see M. Rambaud, *L'art de la déformation historique dans les Commentaires de César* (Paris, 1953), 24. At Cic., *Fam.* 15.4.8–9, alone, there occur five instances of the first person plural employed in order to unite Cicero with his soldiers in the violence of conquest. See also G.O. Hutchinson, *Cicero's Correspondence. A Literary Study* (Oxford, 1998), 88–89.

[32] Bennett, *Trajan*, 106. For the first instances of this epithet's application to Trajan, see Plin., *Pan.* 2.7 and 88.4; *Epist.* 10.1.2. Although attributed as of AD 98, however, Trajan only officially accepted it within his titulature in AD 114. Unseemly haste was to be avoided.

especially interested in letters.[33] On the other hand, L. Licinius Sura has been plausibly adduced as the ghostwriter actually responsible for writing the [*Bella*] *Dacica*.[34] The surmise is attractive for a number of reasons. First and foremost, Sura was particularly interested in literature and in fact had responsibility for Trajan's public speeches in Latin.[35] Secondly, he is known to have participated in the campaigning in Dacia, having been chosen by Trajan to accompany the praetorian prefect Saburanus when there was an attempt to reach peace through negotiations with Decebalus at one point in the first Dacian war.[36] Third, until the time of his death in 109/110, Sura was an intimate friend and enjoyed the unstinting trust of Trajan. Indeed, allegedly responsible for Nerva's adopting Trajan as his successor, Sura enjoyed both a second and a third consulate under Trajan and was honored with a statue and a public funeral.[37] In view of his talents, intimacy with the emperor, and presence on the campaigns, Sura has precisely those characteristics that one would have expected of the author of the [*Bella*] *Dacica*.

2. Hadrian

Memoirs serve to correct the incorrigible. The occasions on which Hadrian sought to refashion the truth after his own desires are patently manifest. Knowledgeable contemporaries were not misled by the imperial version of historical truth, or else preferred the macabre and salacious to the mundane. Of course, lies mixed with the truth are more palatable. When Hadrian came to write his autobiography in the months prior to his death, he took great care to assert both the worthiness of his stock and the justice of his reception and exercise of imperial power. Unlike his predecessor, who had been styled *optimus princeps* by the Senate both during and after his life, Hadrian found it difficult to win acceptance. Discontent expressed itself in multiple ways.

Not unexpectedly, Hadrian opened the autobiography with an account of the origins of his family, remarking their more recent Spanish roots while stressing their ultimate Italic origin. With verisimilitude, if not with

[33] Dio, 68.7.4; Aur. Vict., *Caes.* 13.8.
[34] *PIR*^{2} L 253.
[35] Iulian., *Caes.* 22 (327A); SHA, *Hadr.* 3.11.
[36] Dio, 68.9.1–3.
[37] Dio, 68.15.3^2–16.1a.

truth,[38] he claimed that the Aelii originated from the Picentine coastal community of Hadria:

> *Origo imperatoris Hadriani uetustior a Picentibus, posterior ab Hispaniensibus manat, si quidem Hadria ortos maiores suos apud Italicam Scipionum temporibus resedisse in libris uitae suae Hadrianus ipse commemoret.*
>
> (SHA, *Hadr.* 1.1)
>
> The emperor Hadrian's family of old derived from Picenum, whereas more recently it came from Spain. In fact, Hadrian himself remarks in his autobiography that his ancestors came from Hadria and had settled at Italica in the time of the Scipiones.

The use of the *cognomen* "Hadrianus" by Hadrian's father reveals that the claim was not original to Hadrian himself, but rather had been advanced by the family for some time.[39] But this emphasis within the autobiography upon an Italic ancestry, it may be suspected, was a response to hostile testimony within Roman circles. By reasserting his family's Italic origins in the middle Republic and pointing to long service on behalf of the Roman state, Hadrian was refuting those who dismissed him as a provincial upstart, as *Hispanus* rather than *Hispaniensis*.[40] To the same end, Hadrian will have recorded the fact that he was born at Rome on 24 January AD 76.[41] From first to last viewed as an outsider who had ascended

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[38] Cf. R. Syme, "Hadrian's Autobiography: Servianus and Sura" in *Roman Papers*, ed. A.R. Birley (Oxford, 1991), 6.398–408 (originally in *Bonner Historia-Augusta-Colloquium 1986/1989* [Bonn, 1991], 189–200), here 399: "As in other ages, the traditions about old colonial families tend to be dubious."

[39] For the name of P. Aelius Hadrianus Afer, see *PIR*^{2} A 185. Behaving as though Hadria were his native city, Hadrian indeed served as its eponymous magistrate: SHA, *Hadr.* 19.1 (*item Hadriae quinquennalis, quasi in alia patria*). It has also been ingeniously and convincingly suggested that Hadrian made use of his Hadriatic origins when celebrating the establishment of the Panhellenion, with one result apparently being the transferral from Atria to Hadria of the story told about Dionysius of Syracuse's (re-)foundation of the city: A.R. Birley, "Hadrian, *De vita sua*," in *Antike Autobiographien. Werke, Epochen, Gattungen*, ed. M. Reichel (Cologne, 2005), 223–235, here 234–235. For the city's history, see the overview furnished by G. Uggeri, "Hadria," in *Brill's New Pauly. Encyclopaedia of the Ancient World*, eds. H. Cancik and H. Schneider (Leiden, 2004), 5.55–56.

[40] Birley, "Hadrian, *De vita sua*," 225.

[41] SHA, *Hadr.* 1.3: *natus est Romae VIIII. kal. Feb. Vespasiano septies et Tito quinquies consulibus*. This testimony is not without its problems, as recognized most recently by W. Eck, "Hadrianus," in *Brill's New Pauly. Encyclopaedia of the Ancient World*, eds. H. Cancik and H. Schneider (Leiden, 2004), 5.59–64: "probably in Rome." On the other hand, it is probably best accepted as authentic: R. Syme, "Hadrian and Italica," *JRS* 54 (1964) 142–149 (= Syme, *Roman Papers*, ed. E. Badian [Oxford, 1979], 2.617–628), here 142 (= 617); A.R. Birley, *Hadrian. The Restless Emperor* (London, 1997), 315 n. 1. For the likely dependence of the SHA upon Hadrian's autobiography, via the biography composed by Marius Maximus, see the sensible remarks of Birley, "Hadrian, *De vita sua*," 224.

the throne thanks only to the ties of family uniting him to Trajan, Hadrian clearly perceived the need to emphasize his Italic and Roman beginnings.

Further along in the autobiography, or so it is commonly assumed, apologetic mention was made of Hadrian's fondness for drink, a vice that he evidently displayed when serving Trajan as quaestor during the initial campaign of the first Dacian war.[42] As is demonstrated by the memorable example of Cicero's account of a hangover M. Antonius in the *Philippicae*, there was no more effective means of discrediting a political enemy at Rome than to accuse him of an inordinate fondness for drink.[43] The quality of *abstinentia*, or a lack thereof, was perceived as being of immense relevance to political behavior, and, in what was essentially his first important political office, Hadrian seems to have behaved scandalously:

> *Quando quidem et indulsisse uino se dicit Traiani moribus obsequentem atque ob hoc se a Traiano locupletissime muneratum.*
>
> (SHA, *Hadr.* 3.3 = *HRR*^{2}, F2)
>
> (Hadrian) says that in fact at that time he drank far too much wine in keeping with the habits of Trajan and for this reason he was very richly rewarded by Trajan.

The admission was damning, even if Hadrian sought to alleviate matters by asserting that he had overindulged in wine in order to be sociable and conform to the behavior of the *Princeps*. The alleged reward for Hadrian's vice is not specified, but his serving as a tribune of the *plebs* for the following year is mentioned in the next sentence and it is perhaps a justifiable inference that this Hadrian was alluding to this office. Which does not mean that his testimony can be accepted acritically. Hadrian had accompanied Trajan as quaestor when the latter departed from Rome in late March AD 101 to campaign against the Dacians. However,

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[42] Birley, "Hadrian, *De vita sua*," 225. Attribution to the *De vita sua* is not altogether certain, however. It is just possible that Hadrian made this statement within the context of a letter (on the order of that infamously addressed by Marcus Antonius to Octavian [Suet., *Aug.* 69.2] or that which Tiberius incredibly addressed to the Senate [Tac., *Ann.* 6.6; Suet., *Tib.* 67]) or speech (extremely unlikely), if it is not apocryphal. It must be remembered, moreover, that *obiter dicta* were a regular feature of the intellectual landscape. For the methodological pitfalls of using such evidence, see K. Hopkins, "Rules of Evidence," *JRS* 68 (1978) 178–186, who in fact uses one involving Hadrian to make the point in his review of F. Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World (31 BC–AD 337)* (London, 1977).

[43] Cic., *Phil.* 2.63; cf. 2.42, 62, 67, 77, 104–105. For drunkenness as one of a standard list of vices that might be used in invective in the late Republic and early Principate, see R.G.M. Nisbet, ed., Cicero, *In L. Calpurnium Pisonem Oratio* (Oxford, 1961), 195; cf. C. Edwards, *The Politics of Immorality* (Cambridge, 1993), 173–206.

Hadrian did not remain with Trajan for the duration of the war. Rather, he returned to Rome so as to take up office as a tribune of the *plebs* on December 11 of that same year. While his holding that position a year earlier than was usual was no doubt a signal honor in and of itself, as was his recent marriage to Trajan's great-niece, Sabina,[44] both the fact that Trajan had not made him a patrician and that Hadrian departed early from the Dacian campaign throw a shadow over this ostensible sign of favor. Notwithstanding the positive picture painted by Hadrian, it very much looks as though Trajan had wished to have him out of the way.[45] Had there been another argument, such as that over boy-favorites, documented for the previous year?[46]

From yet another passage that survives in distant quotation, there is confirmation that Hadrian rendered homage to the gods in writing of his eventual succession to the throne. The passage in question relates an *omen imperii* Hadrian received during his year as tribune of the *plebs*:

> *Tribunus plebis factus est Candido et Quadrato iterum consulibus, in quo magistratu ad perpetuam tribuniciam potestatem omen sibi factum adserit, quod paenulas amiserit, quibus uti tribuni plebis pluuiae tempore solebant, imperatores autem numquam. Vnde hodieque imperatores sine paenulis a togatis uidentur.* (SHA, *Hadr.* 3.4–5)
>
> (Hadrian) became a tribune of the *plebs* in the second consulate of Candidus and Quadratus. He asserts that during his tenure of this magistracy he received an omen of his future unlimited holding of the tribunician power, in that he lost the cloaks that tribunes of the *plebs* customarily used when it rained, whereas the emperors never did so. Indeed, even today emperors make public appearances at Rome without this cloak.

The anecdote cannot stand as reported, for there is clear and incontrovertible evidence that even emperors wore *paenulae* when the weather called for such a garment.[47] Since the consular date indicated is also

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[44] SHA, *Hadr.* 2.10; Birley, *Hadrian*, 42. It would seem that Trajan was not particularly delighted, but nonetheless acceded to Matidia's desire that her daughter be married to Hadrian. This was not to be the last occasion in which Matidia exercised an important influence upon Hadrian's destiny.

[45] Cf. Birley, *Hadrian*, 47, where the reconstruction is less somber. It is to be remarked that the date of Hadrian's service as tribune of the *plebs* depends upon the emendation of SHA, *Hadr.* 7.1–2. An alternative emendation—proposed by T.D. Barnes, *Sources of the* Historia Augusta (Brussels, 1978), 33, 41–42—involves the date of Hadrian's praetorship and would have Hadrian arriving at both the tribunate and the praetorship a couple years *later* than was usually the case.

[46] For the argument that occurred in AD 100, see Birley, *Hadrian*, 40–42.

[47] F. Kolb, "Die *Paenula* in der *Historia Augusta*," *Bonner Historia-Augusta-Colloquium 1971* (Bonn, 1974), 81–101, here 95–99; Birley, "Hadrian, *De vita sua*," 225.

incorrect, it might be wondered whether the source of the *Historia Augusta* was not already corrupt or confused.[48] Be that as it may, the divine sign foreshadowing power was an established element in imperial biography, with roots in models of the Republic and Roman religious thought. Indeed, in the lives of the Caesars written by Hadrian's younger contemporary Suetonius, omens presaging the rise to power are sometimes narrated in detail.[49]

However, the very fact that Hadrian bothered to include this incident within his autobiography is significant.[50] Omens are signs of a future that would otherwise be uncertain, if not unthinkable. In the case of Hadrian, the claim to have received an *omen imperii* betrays a fundamental uncertainty as to whether he would succeed Trajan. Contrary to modern researchers, whose affinity for Hadrian frequently leads them to search for clues betraying Trajan's intentions, contemporaries were well aware that Trajan repeatedly refused to attribute to Hadrian any distinction that might mark him out as heir to the throne.[51] Indeed, the story told by Cassius Dio's father about Trajan's death and Hadrian's adoption, in that order, illustrates just how precarious Hadrian's position was.[52] Even decades after the event people still spoke of Hadrian as having arrived at the imperial purple over a cadaver. In the absence of public signs vouchsafed by Trajan, Hadrian of necessity turned to the gods for justification of his position.

The new reign commenced inauspiciously with bloodshed. Trajan's freedman Phaedimus, who had the function of cupbearer, allegedly committed suicide; since supposedly Trajan had suspected that he was being poisoned, there may have been recourse to murder to keep Phaedimus from talking.[53] At any rate, worse was to come, directly involving

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[48] As remarked above, the year 101/102 is required: Birley, *Hadrian*, 47, 320 n. 24.

[49] Suet., *Aug.* 94–95; *Galb.* 4.1–3, 6.1, 8.2; *Vesp.* 5.

[50] It has been plausibly suggested that mention was also made of other *omina*: Birley, "Hadrian, *De vita sua*," 225. That would have been in character, but no trace of them survives, if they ever existed even in writing.

[51] Most recently there has been an attempt to discern Hadrian within scenes upon the Column of Trajan in Rome and the Arch of Trajan at Beneventum and to deduce from that presence a clear indication by Trajan of Hadrian as his successor; K. Topfer, "Hadrian auf der Trajanssäule," *Mitteilungen DAI Röm.* 114 (2008), 357–388, esp. 388. For photos of the arch, see J. Bennett, *Trajan*, pls. XIV–XVI, nos. 14a–16b; T. Opper, ed., *Hadrian. Empire and Conflict*, (Cambridge, Mass., 2008), 72.

[52] Dio, 69.1; cf. SHA, *Hadr.* 3.8–10. Even if in part inspired by malice, the testimony of Dio's father finds corroboration in the *cursus* of Hadrian.

[53] For the figure of Phaedimus, see *ILS* 1792. As for Trajan's suspicions, see Dio,

Hadrian: the so-called "plot of the four consulars" of AD 118.[54] The passage concerns the execution of four leading statesmen because of the threat that they posed to the new *Princeps* and his hold upon power. Ostensibly they had been engaged in a conspiracy and were put to death at the order of the Senate:

> *Nigrini insidias quas ille sacrificanti Hadriano conscio sibi Lusio et multis aliis parauerat, cum etiam successorem ⟨sibimet⟩ Hadrianus destinasset, euasit. Quare Palma Tarracenis, Lusius in itinere, senatu iubente, inuito Hadriano, ut ipse in uita sua dicit, occisi sunt.* (SHA, *Hadr.* 7.1–2)
>
> (Hadrian) escaped the plot that Nigrinus together with Lusius and a great many others had prepared for him as he sacrificed, for Hadrian had named a successor for him (i.e., Nigrinus) as well.[55] Consequently, by the Senate's command and contrary to Hadrian's own wishes, as he himself says in his autobiography, Palma and Lusius were put to death, the former at Tarraco and the latter while travelling.

Historical reality was more complicated than this simplistic image suggests. Avidius Nigrinus was both the stepfather and (posthumously) the father-in-law of L. Ceionius Commodus, whom Hadrian adopted as his immediate successor in AD 137.[56] However, tuberculosis prevented Commodus from ascending the throne as the predecessor of the youthful M. Annius Verus, who is better known to posterity as Marcus Aurelius.[57] That a senior statesman such as Commodus' stepfather Nigrinus should have been involved with three other consulars in a plan to assassinate Hadrian and produce another emperor is incredible.[58] Rather, they were guilty of nothing more than being *capaces imperii*.

68.33.2. For analysis and narrative, as well as an introduction to the bibliography, see Birley, *Hadrian*, 80.

[54] For detailed discussion of this event and its repercussions, see Birley, *Hadrian*, 86–89, 94–95. Conspiracies provide an excellent pretext for the elimination of political rivals and are all too easily invented. Hence, supported by Dio's critical judgment (69.2.5–6, 23.2) and the report of senatorial dismay (SHA, *Hadr.* 7.3: *tristissimam … opinionem*), the general modern tendency to disbelief is best.

[55] For this translation and the emendation of the Latin text, see Birley, *Hadrian*, 87; Birley, "Hadrian, *De vita sua*," 226. In all likelihood, Nigrinus was governing Dacia at the time, and it is most improbable that Hadrian had indicated as his successor on the throne a contemporary who was somewhat older than himself and without any connection to the imperial family. Indeed, as remarked by Birley, Hadrian's presumptive heir in AD 118 must have been none other than his colleague in that year's consulate, who was also his niece's husband: Cn. Pedanius Fuscus Salinator.

[56] *PIR*^{2} C 605; SHA, *Hadr.* 23.10. See also *PIR*^{2} A 1408, with stemma at 1.287.

[57] Birley, *Hadrian*, 292–296.

[58] Comparison with the assassination of Galba is instructive, for Otho did not involve

Monarchy dislikes competition, and Trajan had left Hadrian in a delicate situation, not having officially displayed him as his heir.

Hadrian's insistence upon these men's execution having been contrary to his wishes acquires new meaning within the context of an autobiography composed toward the very end of his life. Omission of this unfortunate episode altogether might have been expected. Hadrian, instead, chose to relate it, providing contemporaries and posterity with a permanent record of what had been his stance at the time. This narrative strategy may reflect the emperor's need to salve his own conscience, for the ablatives absolute *senatu iubente inuito Hadriano* incontrovertibly cast the blame for these murders upon the Senate. But the disavowal of tyrannical behavior and its concomitant attribution to the Senate more likely served another, more timely purpose. In the final months of his life, Hadrian was concerned to secure the throne for the juvenile M. Annius Verus (Marcus Aurelius). For that reason, in fact, he had his brother-in-law, Servianus, and his great-nephew, Fuscus, put to death on the charge of conspiracy. Their alleged crime was the hope of succeeding to the imperial throne. As is revealed by the claim of senatorial historiography that Hadrian was "hated by all" (*inuisus omnibus*) at the time of his death, these executions provoked discontent within the senate much as had those of the four consulars some two decades previously.[59] It was desirable for Hadrian to demonstrate that he was not a tyrant, lest his arrangements for the imperial succession be set aside. The language of the ablatives absolute in this passage serves to depict Hadrian as a constitutional monarch, allowing the Senate to pursue a course of action and enjoy its prerogatives even they when are mistaken. Whatever the truth of the matter, and it is hard to believe that the Senate would have dared to take an action that the emperor had explicitly opposed, Hadrian disclaimed all responsibility in his autobiography. In doing so, he rendered it more difficult, if not impossible, for his enemies to question the legitimacy of his rule and final dispositions.[60]

The same admixture of motivations would seem to have informed Hadrian's account of the death of his favorite. Hostile rumor claimed that

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his peers within the Senate in what was clearly a conspiracy. Rather, the *libertus* Onomastus was in charge of recruiting among disaffected praetorians: Tac., *Hist*., 1.25.1; Suet., *Oth*. 5.2; Plut., *Galb*. 24.1–2; cf. Dio, 63.5.2–3.

[59] SHA, *Hadr*. 25.7.

[60] A similar vision emerges from analysis of Hadrian's choice of Antoninus as his successor, for which see Birley, *Hadrian*, 296: "The main consideration … was stability at the centre."

Antinous' death had neither been due to natural causes nor an accident, but that Hadrian had him killed. Defending himself from such slander, Hadrian provided the official version of what had happened during that fateful cruise upon the Nile:

> ἐν δὲ τῇι Αἰγύπτωι καὶ τὴν Ἀντινόου ὠνομασμένην ἀνωικοδόμησε πόλιν. ὁ γὰρ Ἀντίνοος ἦν μὲν ἐκ Βιθυνίου πόλεως Βιθυνίδος, ἣν καὶ Κλαυδιούπολιν καλοῦμεν, παιδικὰ δὲ αὐτοῦ ἐγεγόνει, καὶ ἐν τῇι Αἰγύπτωι ἐτελεύτησεν, εἴτ' οὖν ἐς τὸν Νεῖλον ἐκπεσών, ὡς Ἁδριανὸς γράφει, εἴτε καὶ ἱερουργηθείς, ὡς ἡ ἀλήθεια ἔχει. τά τε γὰρ ἄλλα περιεργότατος Ἁδριανός, ὥσπερ εἶπον, ἐγένετο, καὶ μαντείαις μαγγανείαις τε παντοδαπαῖς ἐχρῆτο. καὶ οὕτω γε τὸν Αντίνοον, ἤτοι διὰ τὸν ἔρωτα αὐτοῦ ἢ ὅτι ἐθελοντὴς ἐθανατώθη—ἑκουσίου γὰρ ψυχῆς πρὸς ἃ ἔπραττεν ἐδεῖτο -, ἐτίμησεν ὡς καὶ πόλιν ἐν τῶι χωρίωι, ἐν ὧι τοῦτ' ἔπαθε, καὶ συνοικίσαι καὶ ὀνομάσαι ἀπ' αὐτοῦ. (Dio 69.11.2–3)
>
> In Egypt, (Hadrian) also founded anew the city that is named for Antinous. Antinous came from the Bithynian city of Bithynion, which is also known as Claudioupolis, and he had been the emperor's beloved. He died in Egypt, whether as a result of falling into the Nile, as Hadrian writes, or from being sacrificed, as is the truth. As I have said, Hadrian was extremely superstitious and given to making use of divination and magic spells of all sorts. Accordingly, he honoured Antinous either on account of his love for him or because he had voluntarily died—for the affair required that a life be freely given—and he founded a city in the region where (Antinous) had died and named it after him.

Fundamental to the interpretation of this testimony are two observations: Antinous was the favorite of Hadrian and tyrants were expected to act in this fashion, subordinating their respect for human life to a respect for themselves. The unequivocal affirmation that Antinous had been "sacrificed" or ἱερουργηθείς is particularly brutal, and entirely in line with other illustrious victims attributed to the self-centered malice of the *Princeps*.[61] Aspiring to the status of *diuus*, so that his dispositions for the imperial succession might be respected and himself guaranteed a form of immortality, Hadrian had no other option than to respond to such accusations, setting the record straight.

As death approached, Hadrian felt the need to defend his actions as *Princeps*. An accounting would be asked by the Senate, and the recent execution of Servianus and a great-nephew had reopened old, festering wounds. The choice of the mortally ill Ceionius Commodus as Caesar had been a most canny move, aiming to disarm critiques of the past reign

[61] Cf. Herodian., 5.5.6 for the word's unambiguous use.

and to win the time necessary for the youthful M. Annius Verus to come of age and enter into undisputed possession of the empire. The composition of an autobiography was also primarily undertaken for this same end, or so it would seem from the "fragments" that survive. Responding to polemic over Hadrian's origins, personal life, and qualifications as emperor, the autobiography was effectively an *apologia pro se*. Aware that he was unlikely to survive the "climacteric" of his sixty-third year of life,[62] Hadrian sought to portray himself as a worthy successor to the best of emperors, Augustus and Trajan. He thereby laid the basis for the approval of his *acta* and his divinisation, which were measures essential for his own commemoration and the future welfare of the dynasty.

The autobiography will have contained much else relating to Hadrian's exercise of imperial power, especially if it was meant to be addressed to the Senate in posthumous self-defense. For instance, the emperor who had once maladroitly cited Cato the Elder on the subject of Macedonia in order to justify his policy vis-à-vis the less tenable of Trajan's conquests will have perceived the need to portray himself as a general.[63] It is a plausible surmise that the statistics concerning the Bar-Kokhba war derive from Hadrian's autobiography, if not from a text like that of the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*. On a final reckoning, the war had proved a disastrous victory over the Jewish people: 580,000 insurgents were dead, and 50 key forts and 985 villages had been destroyed.[64] To Hadrian's Roman audience, what mattered was that the empire had been preserved intact.

In this context, it is worth remembering that Hadrian is known to have imitated Augustus in the creation of an epigraphic text meant to record for posterity the principal events of his reign. This *Res Gestae Divi*

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[62] Cf. Gell., *NA* 15.7.2.

[63] SHA, *Hadr*. 5.3.

[64] Dio, 69.14.1–3. Although these figures are comparable to those known to have been displayed on placards in triumphal processions of the late Republic and early Principate, they can hardly be accepted as empirical evidence. For problems with ancient statistical data, see W. Scheidel, "Finances, Figures and Fiction," *CQ* 46 (1996), 222–238. For the cost of the war in human terms, see Birley, *Hadrian*, 276; W. Eck and G. Foerster, "Ein Triumphbogen für Hadrian im Tal von Beth Shean bei Tel Shalem," *JRA* 12 (1999) 294–313; W. Eck, *Rom und Judaea. Fünf Vorträge zur römischen Herrschaft in Palästina* (Tübingen, 2007), and *Rom herausfordern. Bar Kokhba im Kampf gegen das Imperium Romanum. Das Bild des Bar Kokhba Aufstandes im Spiegel der neuen epigraphischen Überlieferung* (Rome, 2007). Lastly, it is to be remarked that there is new evidence indicating Hadrian's personal presence in Judaea at the outset of the war in order to verify the gravity of the situation: W. Eck, P. Holder, and A. Pangerl, "A Diploma for the Army of Britain in 132 and Hadrian's Return to Rome from the East," *ZPE* 174 (2010) 189–200, here 198.

Hadriani is remarked by Pausanias as having been inscribed upon the walls of the Pantheon in Athens:

> … καὶ κατ' ἐμὲ ἤδη βασιλέως Ἁδριανοῦ τῆς τε ἐς τὸ θεῖον τιμῆς ἐπὶ πλεῖστον ἐλθόντος καὶ τῶν ἀρχομένων ἐς εὐδαιμονίαν τὰ μέγιστα ἑκάστοις παρασχομένου. καὶ ἐς μὲν πόλεμον οὐδένα ἑκούσιος κατέστη, Ἑβραίους δὲ τοὺς ὑπὲρ Σύρων ἐχειρώσατο ἀποστάντας· ὁπόσα δὲ θεῶν ἱερὰ τὰ μὲν ὠικοδόμησεν ἐξ ἀρχῆς, τὰ δὲ καὶ ἐπεκόσμησεν ἀναθήμασι καὶ κατασκευαῖς ἢ δωρεὰς πόλεσιν ἔδωκεν Ἑλληνίσι, τὰς δὲ καὶ τῶν βαρβάρων τοῖς δεηθεῖσιν, ἔστιν οἱ πάντα γεγραμμένα Ἀθήνησιν ἐν τῶι κοινῶι τῶν θεῶν ἱερῶι. (Paus. 1.5.5)
>
> … and in my time by the emperor Hadrian, who, to a greater degree than anyone else, distinguished himself by his devotion to the gods and contributed to the well-being of each of the subject peoples. He never undertook a war of his own volition, but quelled the revolt of the Jews living to the other side of Syria. As for the number of gods' temples that he constructed from nothing, or how many he decorated with offerings and utensils, or how many gifts he made to the Greek cities or to the barbarians who had asked this of him, it has all been written down at Athens in the common sanctuary of the gods.

The precise location of the Pantheon of Athens is not known, and no material remains survive of the inscription remarked by Pausanias.[65] However, despite the strong attachment that Hadrian as a philhellene felt for Athens, it seems wrong to hold that Hadrian created such an articulate account of his reign as emperor simply for commemoration within Athens. Seemingly on a par with the Academy of Athens and the Mouseion of Alexandria, the Athenaeum created at Rome by Hadrian early in his reign was merely one indication of his desire to make Rome not only the political, but also the cultural capital of the Empire. Accordingly, on analogy with the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, it might be thought that the inscription mentioned by Pausanias was also to be seen in a copy set up at the entrance to the Mausoleum of Hadrian (today commonly known as Castel Sant'Angelo). Even though the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* had been intended for exhibition at the entrance to the Mausoleum of Augustus, the surviving copies and fragments come from Ancyra and other cities in the province of Galatia, where they were inscribed soon after the emperor's death. Ever scrupulous in the care of

[65] For this passage and the limits of current knowledge regarding the Pantheon, see K.W. Arafat, *Pausanias' Greece: Ancient Artists and Roman Rulers* (Cambridge, 1996), 171–172; D. Willers, *Hadrians panhellenisches Programm: Archäologische Beiträge zur Neugestaltung Athens durch Hadrian* (Basel, 1990), 60–62.

his public image and a keen emulator of Augustus, as displayed in his arrangements for the imperial succession *inter alia*, Hadrian in all likelihood ordered that a copy of his *res gestae* be displayed at the entrance to his mausoleum.[66]

Making full use of rhetorical ornament and employing a luxurious style, this letter furnishes a detailed vision of the emperor writing from his death-bed to his successor. If authentic, and there are good reasons for believing that it is, then it provides essential evidence as to the nature of Hadrian's autobiography. The author writes this letter, opening with the pathetic tableau of the present moment:

[Αὐτοκράτ]ωρ Καῖσαρ Ἅδριανὸς Σε[βαστὸ]ς Ἀν[τ]ωνίνωι
[... τ]ωι τειμιωτάτωι χαίρειν. Ὅ[τι ο]ὔτε ἀω-
[ρεὶ οὔτ]ε ἀλόγως οὔτε οἰκτρῶς οὔτε ἀπ[ρος]δοκήτω[ς]
[οὔτε ἀνοή]τως ἀπαλλάσσομαι τοῦ βίο[υ πρὸ παντὸς βού-]
[λομαί σε γν]ῶναι, εἰ καὶ παρατυχόντα μοι νοση[λευομένωι]
[καὶ παρα]μυθούμενον καὶ προτρέποντα δι[ακαρτερεῖν]
[σχεδὸν δόξω ἀ]δικεῖν ὡς εὗρον. Καὶ ἀπὸ τοιού[των οὖν ὁρμῶ-]
[μαι τάδε σοι γρά]ψαι οὐ μὰ Δε[ί᾽] ὡς φ[ο]ρτικὸν λόγο[ν τεχνάζων παῤ]
[ἀλή]θ[ε]ιαν, [ἀλλ᾽] αὐτῶν τῶν πραγμάτων ἁπλῆν [τε καὶ]
[ἀκριβ]εστάτην μνήμην ποιούμενος ε[...]
[...] καὶ ὁ μὲν φύσει πατὴρ γενόμεν[ος ἀσθενὴς]
[τεσσαρά]κοντα βιώσας ἔτη ἰδιώτης μετ[ήλλαξεν]
[ὥστε τῶι ἡμ]ιολίωι πλέον με βιῶναι τοῦ πατρό[ς, τῆς]
[δὲ μητρ]ός με σχεδὸν τὴν αὐτὴν ἡλικ[ί]αν [ἔχειν γεγονυίας]
[ἑξηκον]τούς· ἔτους δὲ ἔτυχον ἄρτι δεικ [...] (*PFay*. 19.1–5)

Imperator Caesar Hadrianus Augustus to his most cherished Antoninus, greetings. I very much desire that you know that I am being released from life neither unseasonably nor without cause nor piteously nor unexpectedly nor bereft of my faculties. Perhaps, as I have found, you will think that I wrong you despite your presence during my illness and your giving comfort and your urging me to be strong. These considerations have led me to write to you, certainly not with the intention of fashioning a banal account that is false, but rather to create an account of my actions that is both straightforward and as accurate as possible ... My natural father fell ill and passed away as a private citizen at age forty. As a result, I have lived

[66] Pace U. Von Wilamowitz, "Res Gestae Divi Augusti," *Hermes* 21 (1886), 623–627, here 623, and T. Mommsen, "Die Rechenschaftsberecht des Augustus," *Gesammelte Schriften* (Berlin, 1906), 4.247–258 (= *Historische Zeitschrift* 57 [1887] 385–397), here 254 (= 393); Pausanias neither claims that Hadrian ordered the display of his inscribed *res gestae* within the Pantheon at Athens nor implies that the inscription mentioned was the sole copy of this inscription. For validation of the hypothesis advanced here, further excavation will be required.

> more than half as long as my father. On the other hand, I have more or less the same age as my mother, who lived to age sixty. I have recently turned [sixty-three] …

The precision of the biographical details, the resonance of this opening with the deathbed poem attributed to Hadrian, and the author's mature, luxurious style are all things that suggest that the letter is a genuine work, not some spurious school exercise. Further support can be drawn from the fact that the second-century papyrus containing this letter shows a second hand (that of a student) engaged in repeating this text. In view of the specific references pointing to a date of composition in AD 138, and given the fact that the six previously identified "fragments" likewise indicate or are consonant with a late date for the writing of the autobiography, it would seem that we possess here a genuine fragment from the very opening of Hadrian's autobiography.[67] If the letter is part of a Greek version of Hadrian's autobiography, there follows the question of whether this version is the original or a translation of a Latin text. The issue is complicated, requiring attention to points of detail as well as general context.

Sundry items point toward composition in Greek. For one thing, there are the philhellenic leanings of the emperor himself, who was derisively labeled *Graeculus* in his youth, or so it would seem.[68] Assuredly, anyone who dared to compose verse in imitation of the obscure Antimachus would have had no difficulty in writing his autobiography in Greek.[69] Intimate with the contemporary philosophers Epictetus and Heliodorus, Hadrian must have been quite capable of expressing himself in Greek.[70] On another note, there is clear and abundant evidence for the importance that Roman intellectuals attributed to Greek during the Second Sophistic.

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[67] J. Bollansée, "*P. Fay*. 19, Hadrian's Memoirs and Imperial Epistolary Autobiography," *AncSoc* 25 (1994), 279–302. In support of the authenticity of the text contained therein, it is to be remarked that, on palaeographic grounds, the papyrus dates to the end of the second century at the latest (279).

[68] SHA, *Hadr*., 1.5: *imbutusque impensius Graecis studiis, ingenio eius sic ad ea declinante, ut a nonnullis Graeculus diceretur*. Cf. *Epit. de Caes*. 14.2; Birley, *Hadrian*, 16–17, citing Juvenal, 3.78, where context confirms the dismissive nature of this diminutive formation. For another view as to the original application of this epithet, see Birley, *Hadrian*, 81.

[69] SHA, *Hadr*., 16.2: *Catacannas libros obscurissimos Antimachum imitando scripsit*. Here, as elsewhere, Hadrian manifests character traits darkly reminiscent of Tiberius; cf. Suet., *Tib*. 70. For another possible rationale informing this choice, see Birley, *Hadrian*, 171.

[70] SHA, *Hadr*., 16.10: *in summa familiaritate Epictetum et Heliodorum philosophos*. For context and further discussion, see Birley, *Hadrian*, 60, 182, 216, 281.

Quintilian writes of cases of Romans' educating their children in Greek so extensively that their Latin suffered.[71] Even earlier, Greek had been a mainstay of cultured Romans: Cicero's letters are filled with Greek citations and Caesar's dying words had been in Greek.[72] Within a generation of Hadrian's death, his beloved "Verissimus," the emperor Marcus Aurelius, wrote the *Meditations*, committing his "innermost" thoughts and reflections to Greek.[73] Suggestive of Roman knowledge of Greek, as well, is the identity of Hadrian's last *ab epistulis Graecis*: Caninius Celer.[74] Perhaps Hadrian did in fact write his autobiography in Greek.

Yet, other considerations militate against such a facile conclusion. First and foremost, there is the nature of the autobiography, which has the air of being a political testament in that it was created with a view to providing an authoritative vision of Hadrian's reign. Political statements in ancient Rome were always expressed in Latin in the first instance, and only thereafter in Greek, if that seemed worth the effort. So, for example, there can be no doubt that Augustus pronounced in Latin the traditional *laudatio funebris* for his son-in-law M. Agrippa in early 12 BC; the importance of the communication was such that it was subsequently translated into Greek for digestion by the provincial elite.[75] Similarly, Augustus composed his *Res Gestae* in Latin, and only subsequently was a Greek translation created for dissemination within the Greek-speaking world.[76] Moreover, there is the possibility that the autobiography was intended for reading within the Senate. That venerable body tended to listen to communications only in Latin, a habit that pedants like Tiberius

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[71] Quint., *Inst. Orat.* 1.1.13. It is tempting to connect this to mirth within the Senate over Hadrian's rustic pronunciation when serving as quaestor (SHA, *Hadr.*, 3.1: *cum orationem imperatoris in senatu agrestius pronuntians risus esset*). However, the "rustic" quality of his Latin accent was likely due to his learning Latin as a second language within the environs of Tibur. For an alternative explanation, which involved military service and travel abroad, see Birley, *Hadrian*, 46.

[72] For the subject of bilingualism in general, see the brief but illuminating remarks of E. Fantham, *Roman Literary Culture. From Cicero to Apuleius* (Baltimore, 1996), 4–6. It is perhaps worth adding that, ever desirous of immortality, Cicero even went so far as to compose for Posidonius an account in Greek of his consulate so that the historian might use this *aide-memoire* in writing a seemingly more objective version. See Cic., *Fam.* 5.12; Fantham, *Roman Literary Culture*, 272 n. 38.

[73] Concerning Hadrian's affection for Marcus Aurelius, see Birley, *Hadrian*, 290.

[74] Philostr., *VS* 1.22.3; Birley, *Hadrian*, 292, 355 n. 28.

[75] L. Koenen, "Die *Laudatio Funebris* des Augustus für Agrippa auf einem neuen Papyrus (*P. Col.* inv. nr. 4701)," *ZPE* 5 (1970), 217–283, with Taf. VIII (a).

[76] A.E. Cooley, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti. Text, Translation, and Commentary* (Cambridge 2009), 21–22, 26–30.

and Claudius approved and fostered.[77] Having the qualities of a *laudatio funebris* and couched in the form of a letter to his adoptive son and successor, Antoninus, Hadrian's autobiography may have been meant as his last, official communication to the Senate. If so, then Hadrian is unlikely to have consciously antagonized his audience by using a language other than Latin. Indeed, his use of Latin in the speech delivered to the Senate urging the divinization of his mother-in-law, Matidia, may be viewed as characteristic. As a result, notwithstanding the intellectual climate and the emperor's personal predilections, it would seem that he composed his autobiography in Latin. Entrusted to the faithful Celer, translation would have been relatively easy and swift.[78]

Yet other characteristics may be discerned or intuited. For one thing, the style should have been both personal and highly ornate in the development of periods. In effect, writing upon his deathbed would seem to have been an invitation to the emperor to engage in what might be termed the virtuoso performance of a lifetime. For one last time might the imperial orator address himself to peers and subjects, seeking to persuade and illuminate. However, the choice of epistolary format brought distinct limits to content and length.[79] Rather than an extensive annalistic narrative of Hadrian's reign, the occasion called for pointed treatment and focus upon the *persona* of the emperor, precisely those things that emerge from the "fragments" transmitted by the *Historia Augusta*. Lastly, if Hadrian actually composed his autobiography in his last weeks or days of life, then he is quite unlikely to have produced anything like the twenty-two books achieved by the rancorous and fortunate L. Sulla.[80] Something more modest, on the order of a single book or two, is more plausible. Like Tiberius, within the compass of a single *commentarius*, Hadrian will have written *summatim breviterque*.[81] Such brevity might also explain why there was a hostile report that he had published the autobiography under the name of his freedmen (SHA, *Hadr.* 16.1), this being a reference to the last two books of the *Olympiads* of Phlegon.[82]

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[77] Suet., *Tib.* 71; *Claud.* 16, cf. 42.

[78] Cf. M. Ant., *Meditat.* 8.26.

[79] Thus Demetrius. *De elocutione* 8–9 (§§ 230–231 Sp.). Cf. P. Cugusi, *Evoluzione e forme dell'epistolografia latina nella tarda repubblica e nei primi secoli dell'impero con cenni sull'epistolografia preciceroniana* (Rome, 1983), 74–75.

[80] Peter, *HRR*^{2}, 1.195–204; in particular Plut., *Sull.* 37.1.

[81] Suet., *Tib.* 61.1: *commentario, quem de vita sua summatim breviterque composuit*. For discussion, see Syme, *Roman Papers* 6.398 (= "Hadrian's Autobiography: Servianus and Sura," 189).

[82] Cf. Birley, "Hadrian, *De vita sua*," 232–233.

In view of the slight and dubious nature of the "fragments" of the autobiography, discussion of Hadrian's style needs to be supplemented with other evidence for his literary skills and tastes. As fortune would have it, the epigraphic and literary record do provide assistance. The emperor's idiosyncratic judgments attracted the attention of contemporaries, whereas his address to the Senate in favor of the divinization of his mother-in-law, Matidia, was committed to stone for the sake of posterity. Consequently, even though different contexts require different stylistic registers, it is possible to form an estimate of what should have been the tone of the autobiography.

The literary record emphasizes the individualistic, contrary nature of Hadrian's style. Capable of citing Cato the Elder in defense of his own policy in Mesopotamia, Hadrian preferred older, more archaic authors to the classics of the Principate: Cato over Cicero, Ennius to Virgil, and Coelius Antipater over Sallust.[83] A case in point is his infamous poem *animula uagula blandula*, which is redolent of the style of Ennius.[84] Another is the group of obscure Greek poems that he composed in imitation of Antimachus and gathered in a collection entitled *Catachannae*.[85] Linguistically clever, he was quite capable of altering traditional forms to speak to contemporary concerns. Hence, one of his letters to the Senate at the height of the Bar Kokhba war dispensed with the customary initial greeting so as to express the gravity of the situation.[86] Last, but not least, his witty response to the sophist Florus vividly captures his verbal dexterity and ability to engage in repartee.[87]

Indicative, rather, of what should have been Hadrian's style within the autobiography is a speech that he delivered in honor of his recently deceased mother-in-law, Matidia. Whether delivered on the occasion of the dedication of a temple to her at Tibur, or spoken within the Senate at the debate over her divinization, this speech was deemed of sufficient interest to be inscribed for posterity's sake.[88] Although highly fragmentary, a restored sample (lines 21–28 of the 37 lines of text) provides a clear idea of Hadrian's style when speaking on state occasions:

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[83] SHA, *Hadr*. 16.6.
[84] SHA, *Hadr*. 25.9; Bollansée, "*P. Fay*. 19," 281n3.
[85] SHA, *Hadr*. 16.2.
[86] Dio, 69.14.3.
[87] SHA, *Hadr*. 16.3–4.
[88] For the text and a discussion of its possible occasion, see C.P. Jones, "A Speech of the Emperor Hadrian," *CQ* 54 (2004) 266–273. While Jones' criticism of Mommsen's notion that it was Hadrian's *laudatio funebris* for Matidia is justified, adoption of Cantarelli's

[Quare dolorem ani]mi mei subleuate, et ea quae pulchre scis de mo-
[ribus eius mement]ote si potius ut nota dicenter quam ut noua.
[Vixit marit]o carissima, post eum longissimo uiduuio in eximio flo-
[re aetatis et] summa pulchritudine formae castissima, matri suae
[obsequ]entissima, ipsa mater indulgentissima, cognata piis-
[sima, omnes iuu]ans, nulli grauis, nemini tristis, iam quod ad me atti-
[net], ante cura singu]lari, post tantum modestia uti nihil umquam a me pe-
[tierit cre]braque non petierit quae peti maluissem …

Within a translation that reflects Hadrian's style, or so it is hoped, this is to say:

> Therefore, assist me to support the sadness of my mind, and recall your own beautiful memories of her character, traits well-known and no revelation. She lived as one dearest to her husband, after his demise remaining extraordinarily chaste the longest time without him, though in the prime of life and very beautiful, most obedient to her mother, herself a mother most indulgent to her children, a most dutiful relative, assisting all, severe and stern with none, in my own case, at first expressing extraordinary concern, then showing such wonderful restraint that she refrained from making numerous requests of me, which I would eagerly have wished to be requested.

As is typical of the age, Hadrian's flowing, rhetorical style is more accumulative than periodic. It is a stately style, giving the impression of extraordinary elegance combined with profound feeling. Characteristic of this style is the employment of a large number of particularly long words and phrases as well as expressions that have a poetic flavor. Examples here include: [*marit*]*o carissima*, *post eum longissimo* (23); *summa pulchritudine formae castissima* (24); [*obsequ*]*entissima*, *ipsa mater indulgentissima* (25); *decus pro meritis* (33). Noteworthy, too, is the abundant use of superlatives and related semantic forms: *carissima* (23), *longissimo* (23), *summa* (24), *castissima* (24), [*obsequ*]*entissima* (25), *indulgentissima* (26), *piis*[*sima*] (26–27), *eximio* (23), *nulli* (27), *nemini* (27), [*singu*]*lari* (28), and *nihil umquam* (28). Deep sentiment is conveyed by the choice of words and their disposition.

The quality and nature of references to Hadrian's autobiography are highly variable. Closest in time and the only surviving source to have

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idea that it was delivered at the dedication of a statue or temple to Matidia in Tibur seems equally unlikely. Better would be the speech that Hadrian delivered within the Senate during the debate over Matidia's adlection amongst the *diui*. The very survival of this speech in epigraphic format suggests its documentary kinship with *senatus consulta*.

made use of this document, Dio makes a parenthetical reference to the autobiography, "as Hadrian writes" (ὡς Ἁδριανὸς γράφει), when citing it for information regarding the death of Antinous.[89] The anonymous author of the *Historia Augusta*, on the other hand, is more specific, albeit relying upon Marius Maximus for report of this document's contents. When citing it for Hadrian's *ultima origo*, the author of the *Historia Augusta* relates that the information is to be found "in the books of his autobiography" (*in libris uitae suae*).[90] When citing it for the execution of the four consulars in AD 118, this author provides a version that is "just as he himself says in the autobiography" (*ut ipse in uita sua dicit*).[91] Lastly, when advancing the belief that Hadrian published his autobiography under the name of his freedman Phlegon, the author of the *Historia Augusta* speaks of "the books of the autobiography that he (i.e. Hadrian) wrote" (*libros uitae suae scriptos a se*).[92] In two other passages, it seems guaranteed that reference is being made to the autobiography, but the bare use of the verbs *dicit* and *adserit* do not provide any evidence as to the length of the autobiography.[93] As in the case of Dio, these passages merely inform us about the work's content. But the two passages in which the author of the *Historia Augusta* employs the plural "books" (*libri*) to describe Hadrian's autobiography do not instill great confidence. Aside from that author's justly merited reputation for falsehood and inaccuracy, there is also the fact that he seems to labor under the misapprehension that Phlegon's two books dedicated to Hadrian's reign were identical with Hadrian's autobiography.[94] In view of this confused state of affairs and the fact that Dio himself treated the whole of the reign within the compass of a single book, it seems better to take a minimalist position to the effect that Hadrian wrote only one book.

In the final analysis, Hadrian's autobiography was effectively a *laudatio funebris sui*. Writing in anticipation of his death and directing his autobiography to the individual who would determine how he was to be remembered by the Roman state, the emperor sought to forestall debate and to guard against criticism of his actions and person. Comparison with Tacitus' monograph *De uita et moribus Iulii Agricolae* is opportune, for a similar apologetic strategy informed the writing and publication

[89] Dio, 69.11.2.
[90] SHA, *Hadr.* 1.1.
[91] SHA, *Hadr.* 7.1.
[92] SHA, *Hadr.* 16.1.
[93] See respectively SHA, *Hadr.* 3.3 and 3.5.
[94] Birley, "Hadrian, *De vita sua*," 232–233.

of that work dedicated to the historian's father-in-law. By the end of his reign, Hadrian seems to have been as unpopular amongst his peers in the Senate as Domitian had been. But, unlike Domitian and instead in a manner reminiscent of Tacitus, Hadrian wrote his own biography so as to defend his memory with posterity. Thereby, he was able to overcome fundamental insecurity not only as to how he would be remembered by future generations, but also regarding the two-tiered succession that he had so carefully arranged. If we accept the letter to Antoninus as genuine, it was originally a private document addressed by the emperor to his adoptive son and successor. If we also accept that this letter contained, or rather stood, as a preface to the autobiography, then there arises the question of its publication. The anonymous author of the *Historia Augusta* reports of Antoninus that "he included Hadrian amongst the gods (*diui*) even though all were opposed."[95] Is it too much to suppose that Antoninus Pius read out the prefatory letter and Hadrian's autobiography at the meeting of the Senate in which it was decided that Hadrian be declared a *diuus*? Whether or not that is how events unfolded, it is clear that Hadrian did receive posthumous confirmation of his *acta* as emperor and that the publication of his autobiography was a part of this process.

3. Appian

Appian was born in Alexandria at the end of the first century. He would have witnessed the Jewish uprising in Alexandria of 116/117. At the time, he might have been quite young and impressionable. Having become a Roman citizen, he moved to Rome as an advocate, and through the influence of his friend, Cornelius Fronto, he obtained the post of *procurator* under Antoninus Pius. This sinecure allowed him to devote himself to writing his *Roman History*. What was unusual was that he divided it up into the history of different ethnic groups in the order in which Rome conquered them: (1) (preface) Early Rome, (2) Italians, (3) Samnites,

[95] SHA, *Antoninus Pius* 5.1: *etiam repugnantibus cunctis inter diuos rettulit*. Cf. Dio, 70.1.1, where only the conclusion of Antoninus' argument with the Senate is given in direct speech. Not surprisingly, it is there related that, when the Senate seemed intent upon not declaring Hadrian a *diuus*, reference was made to the four consulars murdered in AD 118. As for the need for a *senatus consultum* to declare a deceased emperor a *diuus*, see T. Mommsen, *Römisches Staatsrecht* (Berlin, 1887^3), 2.886, cf. 817, 833.

(4) Celts, (5) Sicilians, (6) Iberians, (7) Hannibal, (8) Carthaginians (Libyans and Nomads), (9) Macedonians and Illyrians, (10) Greeks and Ionians, (11) Syrians (Seleucids) and Parthians, (12) Mithradates, (13–17) the Civil Wars, (18–21) the wars in Egypt, (22) the century up to Trajan, (23) Trajan's campaigns against Dacians, Jews, Pontic peoples, and (24) Arabia. When he died in the 160s, he apparently had not finished a section on Rome's military and financial system, and one would imagine he wanted to carry events up at least to the accession of Antoninus Pius. Many of these books are no longer extant or they are fragmentary. Though the scheme looks chaotic and does not appear to have been used by other historians, with the possible exception of Ephorus, the guiding thread was Rome and its expansion. He was an ardent supporter of Rome and the empire, and a conservative, seeing the civil wars as cataclysmic. Somewhat like Polybius, he attributes Roman success to their virtue, in particular: acting on good advice, endurance, patience, and moderation. He included more economic and social matter in his history than most ancient historians. But besides his professed attachment to Rome and the empire, he was also a proud citizen of Alexandria, and Brodersen sees him as making events in Egypt the climax of his work.[96] In the preface, however, he does not even in the slightest hint that Rome's empire was justified. Weissenberger interprets this absence as due to Appian, as a member of the Eastern elite cooperating with Rome, just taking this for granted.[97]

In the general preface to his history Appian makes the following declaration concerning himself and his authorial qualifications:

> τίς δὲ ὢν ταῦτα συνέγραψα, πολλοὶ μὲν ἴσασι καὶ αὐτὸς προέφηνα, σαφέστερον δ'εἰπεῖν, Ἀππιανὸς Ἀλεξανδρεύς, ἐς τὰ πρῶτα ἥκων ἐν τῇι πατρίδι καὶ δίκαις ἐν Ῥώμηι συναγορεύσας ἐπὶ τῶν βασιλέων, μέχρι με σφῶν ἐπιτροπεύειν ἠξίωσαν, καὶ εἴ τῶι σπουδὴ καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ μαθεῖν, ἔστι μοι καὶ περὶ τούτου συγγραφή. (Praef. 15.62 = *FGrHist* 237)
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> Many people indeed know who I am, and I have already indicated it to them. To make things clearer, I am Appian of Alexandria, a person who reached the highest office in my own country. In Rome I have taken cases

[96] K. Brodersen, "Appian," *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (Oxford, 1996), 130, and "Appian und sein Werk," *ANRW* 2.34.1 (Berlin, 1993), 341–363 (352–353). See also in the same volume, I. Hahn and G. Németh, "Appian und Rom," 364–402; and A.R. Birley, *The African Emperor. Septimius Severus*, (London, 1988[2]), on Appian, 6–7.

[97] M. Weissenberger, "Das Imperium Romanum in den Proöemien dreier griechischer Historiker: Polybios, Dionysios von Halikarnassos und Appian," *RhM* 145 (2002), 262–281, here 279.

> before the Emperors until they thought I was worthy of obtaining the office of procurator. If anyone has a strong desire to learn more about me, I refer him to my work on this subject.[98]

At first sight, both the preface itself and mention of his autobiography seem arrogant. However, scholars have been struck by the emphasis he gives to his Alexandrian background, even going so far as to make it part of his name: "I am Appian of Alexandria …" This is also a positive aspect. As a Greek, proud to be Greek and Alexandrian, whose work will be read primarily by Greeks, his pro-Roman attitudes would carry more weight among Greek-speaking Romans. He even continues to call the Ptolemies "my kings" (preface, 39).[99] Moreover, his name, somewhat like "Ammonios," is transparently Egyptian (Ἀπιανός or Ἀπίων from the Egyptian divine bull Apis). Thus, by not renouncing his Egyptian-Greek name, he also demonstrates a certain pride in the land of his birth. Brodersen sees the influence of his autobiography on his history, but perhaps one could say that both were inspired by the same conceptions.

The order in which Appian composed the diverse elements of his *Roman History* has given rise to lengthy and complicated debate. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this order seems to have mirrored the chronological progression of his chosen subject.[100] But the item under consideration here is his autobiography, which was written prior to most, if not all, of the *Roman History*. From the reference that he makes to it within the general preface to the *Roman History*, the work appears to have been an *apologia* of sorts. Ancient historians rarely felt the need to write about themselves within their historical works, and an element of polemic is usually discernible in those instances when they did so. Writing the *Roman History* for a Greek-speaking audience, and himself an Alexandrian who had risen high within the bureaucracy of imperial Rome, Appian seems to have felt the need to defend his choices in politics and culture. Alexandria was distinguished for its history, wealth, and cultural attainments, and the citizens of Alexandria were justifiably reluctant to cede first position to Rome despite the fact that nearly two centuries had passed since the Roman conquest.[101] In collaborating with the Romans and benefiting

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[98] Taken by everyone, it seems, as an autobiography.

[99] See Brodersen, "Appian und sein Werk," 354.

[100] G. Bucher, "The Origins, Program, and Composition of Appian's *Roman History*," *TAPA* 130 (2000), 411–458.

[101] For contemporary expressions of Alexandrian patriotism and anti-Roman sentiment, see the lists and remarks of H.A. Musurillo, ed. and comm., *The Acts of the Pagan Martyrs. Acta Alexandrinorum* (Oxford, 1954), 254–258 and 274–277.

from the condominium, Appian placed himself in a situation analogous to that of Flavius Josephus. One of the three generals to lead the Jewish uprising in the years 66–70, Josephus had opportunely surrendered and gone on to become an honored collaborator of the Flavian rulers of Rome. It was in the years that followed his passage to Rome that Josephus composed his two historical works—the *Jewish War* and the *Jewish Antiquities*—that provided a narrative of recent history and a history of the Jewish people. Subsequently attacked both for his collaboration and for his Jewish faith, Josephus felt compelled to defend himself and wrote both an autobiographical *apologia* of his actions during the Jewish war and a tract *Against Apion* in defense of Judaism.[102] Arguably viewed amiss in certain quarters in Rome and at Alexandria, as so often happens to those who cross cultural borders, Appian seems to have found himself likewise dismissed as a traitor or a bounder. If that inference is correct, then the autobiography to which Appian refers readers with a certain *hauteur* was nothing other than a rehearsal of his career with a view to defending himself against charges of sycophancy and having forsaken his natal city.

As fate would have it, it appears that there also survives an epitaph for Appian. Such at least is the possible identification of this piece that apparently comes from a cemetery at the Vatican.[103] Speaking in the first person together with his wife Eutychia, the author of this epitaph commemorates the honor that he had received from the Roman emperor and the marital happiness that had been his lot for thirty-one years. Written in verse consisting of three couplets pronounced by husband and wife in turn and followed by a single line giving a statistical description of the marriage, this epitaph reads:

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[102] For the autobiography of Josephus and an introduction to the modern bibliography on his works, readers are referred to the preceding chapter written by our colleague P. Villalba.

[103] L. Moretti, "Due epigrammi greci inediti di Roma," *Atti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia (serie III), Rendiconti* 57 (1984–1985), 233–246, here 241–246; P. Goukowsky, "Appien d'Alexandrie, prêtre de Rome sous Hadrien?," *CRAI* 142 (1998), 835–856; G. Bucher, "Some Observations on the Appianos Sarcophagus (*IGUR* 1700)," 159–172, in *Gestures. Essays in Ancient History*, eds. G.W. Bakewell and J.P. Sickinger (Oxford, 2003); K. Brodersen, "Θησαυρίζειν τὴν Εὐτυχίαν—Appianos and his Treasured Eutychia," (forthcoming). For a timely recognition of the importance of Moretti's discovery, see also K. Brodersen, "Appian," 73–74, in *Metzler Lexikon antiker Autoren*, ed. O. Schütze (Stuttgart, 1997); E. Famerie, *Le latin et le grec d'Appien. Contribution à l'étude du lexique d'un historien grec de Rome* (Geneva, 1998), 11–13.

῾Ρώ[μη]ς πανχρυσέοιο Τύχης ἱερατίδα τειμὴν
πὰρ βασιλῆος ἔχων Αὐσονίοιο κράτους
Ἀππιανὸς βιότοιο πανηγύρεως ἀπολαύων
λάρνακα λαϊνέην τῶιδ' ἀνέθηκα τόπωι,
κηδείαν ἐς ἐμὴν καὶ κουριδίης ἀλόχοιο
ἐσθλῆς Εὐτυχίας ἥι συνέζησα βίον.

Ζώσῃ ἅπαντα παρέσχεν ἐμοὶ πάρος ἐσθλὰ βίοιο
Ἀππιανὸς γαμέτης ἔξοχα τειόμενος
καὶ μετὰ φῶς βιότοιο γέρας τόδε με⟨ῖ⟩ζον ἔτευξε
ἄμφω κηδεύσας τοὐμὸν ἑόν τε δέμας
οὐ γὰρ ὁ τεθνῶτας καταθεὶς κεῖνο[ς] τόδ' ἔρεξεν,
ἀλλ' ὁ πρὸ τοῦ θανάτου τοῦτο νόῳ θέμενος.

Δωδεχέτην ἔλαβον, ἔζησεν ἔτη σὺν ἐμοὶ λά.

Honored with the priesthood of the Fortune of all-golden Rome
from the ruler of the Ausonian power,
I, Appian, while enjoying life's festival,
set up in this spot a stone sarcophagus,
for the burial of myself and my lawfully wed wife,
the excellent Eutychia with whom I lived my life.

While I was alive, he gave me all that is excellent in life,
my husband Appian, who honored me above all else.
And after life's light (was gone), he fashioned this greater distinction
by looking after both my own and his burial.
For what you see was not achieved by him who buried the dead,
but by him who, prior to death, set his mind to this.

I married her when she was twelve-years-old, and she lived with me for 31 years.

It appears that in the first two lines the person named Appian refers to the emperor Hadrian's having appointed him a priest of the cult of *Venus Felix et Roma Aeterna*, which was established at Rome in AD 136. It is legitimate to infer that the historian Appian owed his spectacular rise to services rendered to Hadrian during the latter's visit to Egypt in 130–131, during which visit Antinous met with an untimely end.[104] From the fact that there is no reference to the procuratorship subsequently exercised by Appian, it would appear that the marriage commemorated here lasted

[104] Goukowsky, "Appien d'Alexandrie," 849; P. Goukowsky, "Sur les funérailles de Pompée," *Hellènika Symmikta* 2 = *Etudes d'Archéolgie classique* 8 (1995), 56–61, here 56 n. 7; Birley, *Hadrian*, 235–236; G. Marasco, "Adriano e il *tumulus* di Pompeo," *Studia Historica* (Florence, 1988), 21 n. 1. In passing, it should be remarked (pace Birley) that Appian's testimony (*BCiv.* 2.86, *Syr.* 50) regarding the epigram adorning the funeral monument of Pompeius Magnus is to be preferred to that of Dio (69.11.1) and the *Anthologia Palatina*

from c. 120 to c. 150.[105] On the other hand, this unique reference to the priesthood of "the Fortune of all-golden Rome" may provide the key to understanding how an Alexandrian rhetor came to Rome and was co-opted into the elite that governed the empire.

4. Septimius Severus

Seizing the imperial throne in the midst of the upheavals that followed the murders first of Commodus and then of Pertinax, L. Septimius Severus (reigned 193–211) came from a North African family of Punic origins that had been established at Rome for well over a century.[106] It is worth remarking that the family could boast of two consulars in the generation preceding that of Severus, even if his father seems not to have followed a senatorial career himself.[107] Although less illustrious in his initial career than his older brother Geta,[108] Severus happened

(9.402). Consequently, attribution of that epigram to the emperor Hadrian must be considered an erroneous invention typical of the common tendency to invest rulers with extraordinary talent.

[105] For Appian's procuratorship, see Fronto, *Epistula ad Antoninum Pium* 10 (168, van den Hout; 1.262, Haines); *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* (1971) no. 766. As for his service as *advocatus fisci*, which is a supposition frequently to be encountered in modern scholarship, readers are referred to the critical observations of Famerie, *Le latin et le grec d'Appien*, 7–10; Goukowsky, "Appien d'Alexandrie," 839–840 n. 35; H.-G. Pflaum, *Les procurateurs équestres sous le Haut-Empire romain* (Paris, 1950), 200–205. Last, but not least, the phrase βιότοιο πανηγύρεως ἀπολαύων in line 3 of the epigram discussed here suggests that Appian's inspiration to write an epic history of Rome in prose may have derived from the celebrations of AD 148: Brodersen, "Θησαυρίζειν τὴν Εὐτυχίαν," (forthcoming) n. 14.

[106] Birley, *Septimius Severus*[2], 212, 219–220 n. 25–26 (C. Septimius Severus, *cos.* 160 and L. Septimius Severus); A.R. Birley, "Names at Lepcis Magna," *Libyan Studies* 19 (1988), 1–19.

[107] Birley, *Septimius Severus*[2], 38, 214 n. 15 (P. Septimius Aper, *cos.* 153), 219 n. 25 (C. Septimius Severus, *cos.* 160); B.E. Thomasson, *Senatores Procuratoresque Romani* (Gothenberg, 1975), 75–76 (for the latter of the two); M. Corbier, "Les familles clarissimes d'Afrique proconsulaire (I[er]–III[e] siècle)," *Epigrafia e ordine senatorio* (*Tituli*) 5 (Rome, 1982), 685–754, here 723; B.E. Thomasson, *Laterculi Praesidum* (Gothenberg, 1984–1990), 1.62, 282, 383, 390 (for the latter of the two). For his father P. Septimius Geta, see Birley, *Septimius Severus*[2], 215 and 218 n. 20; A.R. Birley, "Some notes on HA Severus 1–4," *Bonner Historia-Augusta-Colloquium 1968–1969* (Bonn, 1970), 59–77, here 302 n. 1, where it is suggested that he was *advocatus fisci* and an equestrian military tribune (positions implausibly attributed to Severus by Aur. Vict., *Caes.* 20.8; Eutr., 8.18; SHA, *Geta* 2.4).

[108] For the *cursus* of P. Septimius Geta, *cos. II ord.* 203, see esp. *Inscriptions of Roman Tripolitania*, 541; Birley, *Septimius Severus*, 34, 39–40, 45, 49, 54, 65, 77, 83; B.E. Thomas-

to be the right person in the right place at the moment that news arrived concerning the assassination of Pertinax and Didius Julianus' indecorous purchase of the imperial purple. The legions of Pannonia were outraged and recalled with affection the figure of Pertinax; Severus drew upon this wellspring of goodwill and the fact that he was close to Italy to invade the peninsula and occupy Rome.[109] Thus, the first act in a civil war evoking shades of AD 68–69. Subsequently, there were the rivals Pescennius Niger in Syria and Clodius Albinus in Britain to stall and subsequently liquidate. First, Severus dealt with the threat posed by Niger in the East, defeating his forces and putting him to death in 195. Next, he fought against Albinus and had eliminated this second competitor in southern Gaul by early 197. Judicial savagery followed, as potential residual threats amongst the ranks of the Senate were executed in accordance with the logic of civil war. Such, it may be presumed, was the material treated within the autobiography that Severus wrote at this time or very soon thereafter.[110] Civil wars occasion the need for self-justification, and Severus was not particularly well known to contemporaries.

Very little survives of the autobiography, for it would not appear to have attracted readers or survived past the first half of the third century AD.[111] There exists only one possible fragment, in the strict sense and exiguous to say the least, and eleven *testimonia* indicating what were the contents of this lost work.[112] Most useful as a general description is a

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son, *Senatores Procuratoresque Romani*, 73–74; B.E. Thomasson, *Laterculi Praesidum*, 28–29; 138, 155; B.E. Thomasson, "Zur Laufbahn einiger Statthalter des Prinzipats," *Opuscula Romana* 15 (1985), 109–141, here 135.

[109] A.R. Birley, "The *coups d'état* of the Year 193," *Bonner Jahrbücher* 169 (1969), 243–280, esp. 272–273.

[110] F. Chausson, "L'autobiographie de Septime Sévère," *REL* 73 (1995), 183–198, here 189–194. Contra Birley, *Septimius Severus*, 167–168; Z. Rubin, *Civil-War Propaganda and Historiography*, (Collection Latomus 173), (Brussels, 1980), 134–135. Other discussions are inconclusive: M. Platnauer, *The Life and Reign of the Emperor L. Septimius Severus* (Oxford, 1918), 17–18; J. Hasebroek, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Kaisers Septimius Severus* (Heidelberg, 1921), 8.

[111] It was certainly known to and used by Dio and Maximus, but doubts have been expressed about Herodian (Chausson, "L'autobiographie," 184; *contra* H. Sidebottom, "Herodian's Historical Methods and Understanding of History," *ANRW* 2.34.4 [1998], 2775–2836, here 2786, whose argument is all the stronger because Herodian [2.9.4] has not employed a rhetorical plural, but instead offers a precise, single source). However, there is the occasional optimism about Victor's having made use of it, for which see below.

[112] Chausson, "L'autobiographie," is very good, with his discussion of the eleven "witnesses," or *testimonia*.

reference made by the anonymous author of the *Historia Augusta* towards the very close of the fourth century:

> *Vitam suam priuatam publicamque ipse composuit ad fidem, solum tamen uitium crudelitatis excusans.* (SHA, *Sev.* 18.6)
>
> He wrote an accurate account of his private and public life, seeking to justify only his evil reputation for cruelty.[113]

The emphasis upon Severus' feeling the need to justify *solum … uitium crudelitatis* is particularly suggestive, for that is the charge that was leveled against him in the immediate aftermath of his victory over Albinus in early 197. Severus had sixty-four senators put on trial, and twenty-nine of these were executed.[114] For the senators and equestrians, in whose hands the effective control of the historical record lay, these actions and numbers bespeak unutterable cruelty, one of the hallmarks of a tyrant. Combined with the fact that none of the *testimonia* or fragments indicates treatment of anything that occurred subsequent to 197, this passage thus provides a clear indication of the content and scope of Severus' autobiography.

Debate over the date of publication has oscillated between those in favor of 197/198 and those who believe that some moment in 205 or thereafter is more likely.[115] Most telling is the absence of anything referring to events that occurred after Severus' victory over Albinus in early 197. Arguments from silence are always fragile. However, in view of items such as the destruction in 205 of Severus' former collaborator, son-in-law, and praetorian prefect, Plautianus, the argument from silence in this

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[113] For a detailed examination of the nuances of *privatus*, see J. Béranger, "Le *privatus* dans l'*Histoire auguste* et dans la tradition historique," *Bonner Historia-Augusta-Colloquium 1982–1983* (Bonn, 1985), 21–55, esp. 46–47, for use of the term under the Principate and in the SHA. While the old dichotomy *priuatus-publicus* persisted, there arose with the Principate a new version of this dichotomy, whereby there was observed a distinction between the emperor and all other members of the body politic. In general, see L. De Libero, "Privatus," in *Brill's New Pauly. Encyclopaedia of the Ancient World*, eds. H. Cancik and H. Schneider (Leiden, 2007), 10.354–355.

[114] G. Alföldy, "Septimius Severus und der Senat," *Bonner Jahrbücher* 68 (1968), 112–160. A list of forty-one names is given at SHA, *Septimius Severus*, 13.1–7, on which see also G. Alföldy, "Eine Proskriptionsliste in der *Historia Augusta*," *Bonner Historia-Augusta-Colloquium 1968–1969* (Bonn, 1970), 1–11. It will be remarked both that this figure is less than the rhetorical numbers asserted by the other historical sources and that ten of these names are demonstrably invented.

[115] For the low date, see Chausson, "L'autobiographie," 189–194. For the high date, on the other hand, see Birley, *Septimius Severus*, 167–168; Rubin, *Civil-War Propaganda*, 134–135.

instance seems particularly compelling.[116] On the other hand, the contemporary Marius Maximus remarked on Severus' silence regarding his first wife, Marciana Paccia, which is comprehensible only if the autobiography was composed and published prior to her being honored with public statues.[117] Moreover, the autobiography is perhaps best viewed as being, like Dio's pamphlet on the omens that presaged Severus' rise to power, part of the partisan literature created specifically to win the peace in the wake of victory on the battlefields of civil war.[118] Indeed, justification for crimes usually follows soon upon their accomplishment, at the moment when public indignation is at its most acute. Thereafter, the passage of time and loss of memory render less necessary the need to engage in partisan self-defense. Lastly, clear precedents and parallels effectively disprove the claim that Severus cannot have had sufficient time to compose his autobiography in 197.[119] With the assistance of an *amanuensis*, a brief, punctual volume might easily have been composed. Julius Caesar wrote his *commentarii* in the midst of campaigns as well as during the brief winter "respite" of assizes.[120] Marcus Aurelius composed his *Meditations* while engaged in campaigns against the Marcomanni and Quadi upon the middle Danube.[121] Julian wrote voluminously both during his time as a Caesar in Gaul as well as during the Persian campaign, taking his library along with him in the march upon Ctesiphon.[122] Displaying his will to spend time in listening to legal cases, Severus will have likewise found the time and possessed the means for rapid composition of the justificatory pamphlet that was his autobiography.[123]

As is to be expected for an autobiography, the sources must have been predominantly oral and Severus will himself have been the principal

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[116] *PIR*^{2} F 554 (C. Fulvius Plautianus). Involvement in this man's execution as well as that of his son and daughter will have contributed to the context that made it opportune for Caracalla to write an account of his own campaign undertaken against the Parthians in AD 216 (see below).

[117] *IRT* 410–411; *CIL* 8.19494 = *ILS* 440 = *ILAlg.* 2.565.

[118] Cf. F. Millar, *A Study of Cassius Dio* (Oxford, 1965), 35–36.

[119] For much of what follows, see Chausson, "L'autobiographie," 190.

[120] Cf. Plut., *Caes.* 17.7; Suet., *Iul.* 56.5.

[121] M. Ant., *Meditat.* 2 praef.

[122] Iulian., *Epist.* 106 and 107 (Bidez), expressing solicitude for the envoy of the library of Bishop George of Ancyra to Julian at Antioch.

[123] Dio, 76.16.4. Cf. Birley, *Septimius Severus*^{2}, 164–165; Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World*, 533–535, with reference to the evidence of the *Digest*.; W.L. Westermann and A.A. Schiller, *Apokrimata. Decisions of Septimius Severus on Legal Matters* (New York, 1954); C. Youtie and A.A. Schiller, "Second Thoughts on the Columbia *Apokrimata* (*P. Col.* 123)," *CE* 30 (1955), 327–345.

fount of information and, most likely, invention. For those episodes in which he had been directly involved, the emperor will have found it neither necessary nor desirable to rely upon others' recollections. Of course, he may have reworked earlier writings, such as the letter sent to the Senate to announce his victory over Albinus in February 197.[124] For those things of which he had indirect knowledge, on the other hand, most information can be assumed to have come by word of mouth. On occasion, however, as in the instance of the diverse omens foretelling his coming to power, Severus may well have relied upon a written source, here the pamphlet composed by Dio.[125] Whatever the source, nonetheless, it can be taken for granted that Severus adapted things so as to be congruent with the façade that he wished to present to contemporaries.

Writing his résumé of imperial history at the moment of Julian's accession to the throne, the imperial functionary Sextus Aurelius Victor dedicates, as is his custom, attention to the cultural attainments of Septimius Severus.[126] In so doing, he makes reference to the autobiography that Severus had written, passing judgment upon it: *idemque abs se texta ornatu et fide paribus composuit* (Vict., *Caes*. 20.22: "He also wrote of his deeds with the same respect for art and the truth"). The appreciation has been unanimously taken by modern scholars to be positive, and the context seems to render this interpretation ineluctable.[127] Victor not only shows a decidedly positive view of Severus as an emperor who came to power by means of civil war, but was here writing of the ruler's accomplishments in the field of culture. It is tempting to think that perhaps Victor saw Severus as a model for Julian (reigned 361–363).[128]

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[124] Herodian., 3.8.1; cf. Dio, 75.8.1 (reading a speech to the Senate, presumably in the spring of 197).

[125] Dio, 72.23.1–2; T.D. Barnes, "The Composition of Cassius Dio's *Roman History*," *Phoenix* 38 (1984), 240–255, specifically 245–246, for dating this pamphlet to AD 193–195.

[126] For the date of composition, see H.W. Bird, *Sextus Aurelius Victor. A Historiographical Study* (Liverpool, 1984), 10–12.

[127] Cf. SHA, *Septimius Severus* 18.6; Birley, *Septimius Severus*, 203. Cf. Bird, *Sextus Aurelius Victor*, 74–75, for mild exaggeration of Severus' rhetorical skills. Telling is the comparison with the judgment of Dio, 76.16.1–76.17.2.

[128] Cf. Bird, *Sextus Aurelius Victor*, 54, who believes that Victor proposed Severus as a model for Constantius II. Although Constantius II was still alive at the time of the composition of this epitome, such an identification of Victor's intended audience seems unlikely. Whether veiled or not, criticism of imperial bureaucrats under that ruler would have been most unwise.

However, this evidence for the historical accuracy and literary achievement of Severus' autobiography is not without its problems. Had Victor read a copy of the autobiography? This is a possibility not to be altogether excluded, for rare copies of earlier historical works are known to have survived in the libraries of Rome only to be rediscovered in the latter half of the fourth century.[129] Yet, in all likelihood Victor has merely taken over a comment from his primary source for the period, Marius Maximus.[130] As we have had occasion to remark, that former imperial functionary and general had served under Septimius Severus and gone on to write a series of biographies for the emperors from Nerva to Elagabalus.[131]

If the latter was the case, then there arises the question of whether Victor's manifestly flattering interpretation of this phrase is congruent with its original employment. Doubt is salutary. Maximus had remarked on Severus' intention that his rivals Pescennius Niger and Clodius Albinus succeed him on the throne if he chanced to die.[132] This intention runs directly counter to the charges of multiple and serious vice that Severus made against these men within his autobiography.[133] On another occasion, it emerges that Maximus was of the opinion that Severus had written an autobiography that was trustworthy but for the fact that it justified his excessive cruelty.[134] Against such a backdrop, the inherent ambiguity of the alleged praise of Severus' style and historical accuracy should give pause for thought. Writing at a time when a distant relative of Severus sat upon the throne, Maximus appears to have expressed in muted fashion a negative judgment upon Severus' autobiography: the work would seem to have been worthwhile neither as literature nor as history.[135]

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[129] It is instructive to compare the rediscovery of the *Philippic Histories* of Pompeius Trogus in the 390s AD, on which see R. Syme, "The Date of Justin and the Discovery of Trogus," *Historia* 37 (1988), 358–371.

[130] Cf. Chausson, "L'autobiographie," 183, 187. However, despite the manifest use of intermediaries and the garbled nature of the information transmitted by Victor, there are those who believe that he had read Severus' autobiography: Bird, *Sextus Aurelius Victor*, 74–75 (notwithstanding the lucid analysis and conclusion that he had previously offered at 20); Birley, *Septimius Severus*[2], 202.

[131] For the figure of Marius Maximus, see *PIR*[2] M 308; A.R. Birley, "Marius Maximus: the Consular Biographer," *ANRW* 2.34.3 (1997), 2678–2757; H.W. Bird, "Mocking Marius Maximus," *Latomus* 58 (1999), 850–860.

[132] SHA, *Pesc. Nig.* 4.7–5.1, *Clodius Albinus* 3.4.

[133] SHA, *Clod. Alb.* 10.1–3, 11.4–5, *Pesc. Nig.* 5.1; cf. Herodian., 2.15.1–2. See following discussion.

[134] SHA, *Sept. Sev.* 18.6, cited and discussed above.

[135] Alternatively, with Amm. Marc., 28.4.14, we might hold that Maximus did in fact think highly of the work, and this is a reflection upon his own lack of discrimination.

Only in one instance, albeit through second-hand citation, is it conceivable that a fragment from Severus' autobiography has survived. In describing the initial stages of Severus' career, the anonymous author of *Historia Augusta* reports in laconic fashion that the future emperor "omitted the military tribunate."[136] The expression may derive from Severus himself.[137] However, the report may merely be, as elsewhere, yet another example of how Marius Maximus epitomized what he found in Severus' autobiography. In addition, even were this a genuine fragment, it would be far too little to permit insight into Severus' style. Perhaps more importantly, the claim that this passage derives from Severus himself raises the question as to the language employed for the autobiography. Although Greek was the language of choice for Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius, when writing about themselves from a philosophical or historical vantage point, it seems far more likely that Severus followed in the footsteps of those predecessors whom he is said to have cited in a speech delivered within the Senate after his victory over Albinus.[138] Sulla, Caesar, and Augustus had all written accounts of their involvement in Roman civil wars, but in Latin rather than Greek. Cassius Dio may have composed his pamphlets in favor of Severus in Greek so as to assuage public opinion in the eastern Mediterranean, where the defeat of Niger involved many others in his ruin,[139] but Severus ought to have been concerned first and foremost with the Latin-speaking audience constituted by the ruling elite and the rank and file of the army. For soldiers and senators, who were directly and immediately affected by the course of civil war, Latin was the natural language of communication.[140]

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[136] SHA, *Sept. Sev.* 2.2; Birley, "Some notes," 69.

[137] Birley, *Septimius Severus*[2], 39.

[138] Dio, 75.8.1.

[139] Most spectacular was the case of Antioch: Dio, 74.8.4–5; Herodian., 3.6.9; SHA, *Sept. Sev.* 9.4, *Digest.* 50.15.1.3 (Ulpian), 50.15.18.3 (Paul), *IGR* 3.1012; Malalas, 12.294. See also Birley, *Septimius Severus*, 114; R. Ziegler, "Antiochia, Laodicea und Sidon in der Politik der Severer," *Chiron* 8 (1978), 493–514, esp. 493–500; G. Downey, "Malalas on the History of Antioch under Severus and Caracalla," *TAPA* 68 (1937) 141–156.

[140] For the importance of Latin and its association with the spread of Roman arms, see K. Stauner, *Das offizielle Schriftwesen des römischen Heeres von Augustus bis Gallienus (27 v. Chr.–268 n. Chr.). Eine Untersuchung zu Struktur, Funktion und Bedeutung der offiziellen militärischen Verwaltungsdokumentation und zu deren Schreibern* (Bonn, 2004), 217; see more generally H. Galsterer, "Das Militär als Träger der lateinischen Sprach- und Schriftkultur," 37–50, in *Das Militär als Kulturträger in römischer Zeit*, ed. H. Von Hesberg (Cologne, 1999). Cf. T.P. Wiseman, "The Publication of *De Bello Gallico*," 1–9, in *Julius Caesar as Artful Reporter*, eds. K. Welch and A. Powell; *The War Commentaries as Political*

Turning to the details of the autobiography, as they are reported by later authors, we can appreciate the ways in which Severus sought to mold historical memory to the perceived needs of the moment. As is usual for the genre, this work is patently more focused upon the present than upon the future.

Although he provided sundry details and seemingly a connected narrative relating his life as a private citizen, Severus made no reference to his first wife, Paccia Marciana, to whom he had been married in 174, when serving as tribune of the *plebs*.[141] A close collaborator of Severus during his reign, the percipient Marius Maximus did not fail to notice this omission from the record. Hence, the report that is transmitted by the anonymous author of the *Historia Augusta* in sibylline fashion: *Vxorem tunc Marci⟨an⟩am duxit, de qua tacuit in historia uitae priuatae. Cui postea in imperio statuas conlocauit*. (SHA, *Sev*. 3.2: "It was at this time that he married Marci⟨an⟩a, of whom he says nothing in the account of his life as a private citizen. Subsequently, when emperor, he set up statues in her honor.") Partial confirmation is furnished by inscriptions indicating that statues were erected in honor of Paccia Marciana only well into the reign, c. 202/3.[142] That information is congruent with what the *Historia Augusta* reports elsewhere, asserting that Severus honored thus not only his first wife, but also his father, mother, and grandfather.[143] Both the voyage back to his native land and the celebrations for his *decennalia* will have rendered it congenial to revise the family portrait, taking into account key figures who would have obtruded had they been mentioned at the height of the civil war. It will be remembered that Severus termed Pertinax his father initially, only to drop the mask once he had proved victorious and to claim Marcus Aurelius and Commodus for his father and brother, respectively.[144] The decision to take cognizance of his own, earlier familial ties is a part of this evolving image of the imperial family as defined by Severus and his heirs.[145]

Instruments (London, 1998) esp. 5, citing Plin., *Epist*. 4.7.2 for the dissemination of Aquillius Regulus' biography of his deceased son.

[141] Birley, *Septimius Severus*[2], 52. See also Birley, "Some notes," 70–71; Hasebroek, *Untersuchungen* 49.

[142] *IRT* 410–411, Lepcis; *CIL* VIII 19494, Cirta.

[143] SHA, *Sept. Sev*. 14.4.

[144] Dio, 75.7.4; SHA, *Sept. Sev*. 11.3–4, 12.8.

[145] In this context, worthy of note is the subsequent elimination of Plautianus and the destruction of his images: Dio, 75.16.4; with a listing of damaged inscriptions at *PIR* F 554. See also Herodian., 3.11–12; SHA, *Sept. Sev*. 14.5; Amm. Marc., 26.6.8, 29.1.17. For the figure of this praetorian prefect, see *PIR* F 554; Pflaum, *Carrières*, nr. 238. It is

There existed also other reasons for Severus' failure to mention Paccia Marciana in his autobiography. True, she was the daughter of a wealthy family in North Africa and had been a most suitable match for Severus in the mid–170s.[146] However, contrary to the unsubstantiated assertion of the *Historia Augusta*, she would seem not to have had any children. Or, if there were, they died in childbirth, which was very probably her fate.[147] Moreover, it was the marriage to Julia Domna that shed luster upon Severus' rise to power.[148] Not only was she alive and married to him throughout his reign, but she was the mother of his two heirs—Bassianus (or Caracalla to posterity) and Geta—and she had been party to some of the omens that presaged Severus' future grandeur. Lastly, but certainly not without consequence, she was descended from a princely line in the East and brought substantial wealth with her to the marriage. In short, everything was against Severus' mentioning Paccia Marciana when he wrote his autobiography. Success and age, on the other hand, give reason for generosity.

Success also explains the attention given to omens that would otherwise have been held to have no significance and gone unrecorded. The sources are replete with stories of omens foretelling Severus' accession to the imperial throne. No fewer than twelve instances linked to his accession and victory in the subsequent civil wars are reported by the *Historia Augusta*.[149] In what survives of his *Roman History*, seven omens are reported by Cassius Dio, who had begun his career as a historian by writing a pamphlet dedicated specifically to this subject.[150] Although eschewing detail, Herodian leaves readers with the impression that these signs were numerous, and significantly remarks, "Severus has himself related many of them and set up public representations of them."[151] Manifestly,

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highly likely that the *gens* Fulvia to which Plautianus belonged was one of the families that had emigrated from Italy to Leptis Magna (Birley, "Names," 3; P. Romanelli, "Fulvii Lepcitani," *Archeologia Classica* 10 [1958], 258–261) and that Severus' mother, Fulvia Pia, was a member of that same family (Dio 73.15.4; *PIR*^{2} F 554).

[146] Cf. *PIR*^{2} P 20; Birley, "Some notes," 71; M.-T. Raepsaet-Charlier, *Prosopographie des femmes de l'ordre sénatoriale (I^{er}-II^{e} siècles)*, (Leuven, 1987), 484 n. 590.

[147] Birley, *Septimius Severus*^{2}, 52, 225; cf. the vagaries of Marcus Aurelius' family.

[148] For the figure of Julia Domna, see *PIR*^{2} I 663; Raepsaet-Charlier, *Prosopographie*, 373–375 n. 436; E. Kettenhofen, *Die syrischen Augustae in der historische Überlieferung. Ein Beitrag zum Problem der Orientalisierung* (Bonn, 1979), 9–23, 59–62, 76–97, 98–128.

[149] SHA, *Sept. Sev.* 1.4, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 2.8, 3.4–5, 3.9, 4.3, 4.6, 10.7.

[150] Dio, 75.3.1–3. This total does not take into account yet another two oracles purportedly deriving from the Syrian sanctuary of Zeus Belus: 79(78).8.5–6; Rubin, *Civil-War Propaganda*, 53–55.

[151] Herodian., 2.9.3 (see below).

not only did a great many reports of omens circulate in the traumatic years 193–197, but Severus himself encouraged their telling and representation in various media so as to bestow greater legitimacy upon his seizure of power. As in the case of previous emperors who had likewise succeeded to the imperial throne despite their coming from outside the imperial family, omens were reported with a view to offering divine validation for the present. When the course of history was discernibly unexpected, recourse was had to the divine in order to afford explanation and justification.

Severus may have related to his innermost circle of family and friends some of the signs that he is alleged to have received over the years,[152] but the most opportune moment for their publication was that immediately following the annihilation of the third of his competitors and given to securing of his hold upon the throne:

> ἀνέπειθε δὲ αυτὸν ὀνείρατα τοιαύτην τινὰ ἐλπίδα ὑποσημαίνοντα, χρησιμοί τε καὶ ὅσα ἐς πρόγνωσιν τῶν μελλόντων σύμβολα φαίνεται· ἅπερ πάντα ἀψευδῆ καὶ ἀληθῆ τότε πιστεύεται ὅταν ἐς τὴν ἀπόβασιν εὐτυχηθῇ. τὰ μὲν οὖν πολλὰ ἱστόρησεν αὐτός τε συγγράψας ἐν τῶι καθ' αὑτὸν βίωι καὶ δημοσίαις ἀνέθηκεν εἰκόσι. (Herodian., 2.9.3–4)
>
> The thing that persuaded Severus [to seize power] was dreams that gave him a hint of hopes in this direction and oracles and other signs that assist in forecasting the future. All of these things are viewed as unerring and true whenever they have a successful outcome. Severus has himself written an account of many of them and set up public representations of them.

Drawing upon his own experiences and possibly those of others, Severus assigned considerable space and importance in his autobiography to the divine signs that foretold his coming to the imperial purple, for they now validated his rule. In so doing, he was following within a well-established tradition of political behavior and narrative at Rome. Official business always began with attention to matters divine,[153] and it is the absence of omens from Severus' autobiography that would have been difficult to comprehend.[154] As can be seen from the manifest desire to co-opt the

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[152] From the reign of Tiberius onward, the annals of imperial Rome are littered with references to those who found that knowledge of the future was a most dangerous, ambiguous possession: Suet., *Tib.* 14.4; Amm. Marc. 29.1.6–40. The history of the "Chaldaeans" remains to be written.

[153] Gell., *NA* 14.7.9; R.J.A. Talbert, *The Senate of Imperial Rome* (Princeton, 1984), 224–225.

[154] For the generation of prodigies by historical events, see the brief but incisive remarks of A. Vigourt, *Les présages impériaux d'Auguste à Domitien* (Paris, 2001) 112–113.

gods in favor of Severus' rule, the divine was an integral element of daily life in ancient Rome.

The "last and most important" of the dreams vouchsafed to Severus is singled out by Herodian for description and linked to the creation of an imposing equestrian statue of Septimius Severus within the midst of the Forum Romanum:

> κατὰ γὰρ τὸν καιρὸν ὃν ἀπηγγέλη Περτίναξ παραλαβὼν τὴν ἀρχήν, μετὰ τὸ προελθεῖν καὶ θῦσαι καὶ τὸν ὑπὲρ τῆς Περτίνακος βασιλείας ὅρκον ἀφοσιώσασθαι ὁ Σεβῆρος ἐπανελθὼν ἐς τὴν οἰκίαν ἑσπέρας καταλαβούσης ἐς ὕπνον κατηνέχθη, μέγαν δὲ καὶ γενναῖον ἵππον βασιλικοῖς φαλάροις κεκοσμημένον ὠιήθη βλέπειν, φέροντα τὸν Περτίνακα ἐποχούμενον διὰ μέσης τῆς ἐν Ῥώμηι ἱερᾶς ὁδοῦ. ἐπεὶ δὲ κατὰ τὴν τῆς ἀγορᾶς ἀρχὴν ἐγένετο, ἔνθα ἐπὶ τῆς δημοκρατίας πρότερον ὁ δῆμος συνιὼν ἐκκλησίαζεν, ὠιήθη τὸν ἵππον ἀποσεῖσασθαι μὲν τὸν Περτίνακα καὶ ῥῖψαι, αὐτῶι δὲ ἄλλως ἑστῶτι ὑποδῦναι τε αὐτὸν καὶ ἀράμενον ἐπὶ τοῖς νώτοις φέρειν τε ἀσφαλῶς καὶ στῆναι βεβαίως ἐπὶ τῆς ἀγορᾶς μέσης, ἐς ὕψος ἄραντα τὸν Σεβῆρον ὡς ὑπὸ τῶν πάντων ὁρᾶσθαι τε καὶ τιμᾶσθαι. μένει δὲ καὶ ἐς ἡμᾶς ἐν ἐκείνωι τῶι χωρίωι ἡ τοῦ ὀνείρατος εἰκὼν μεγίστη, χαλκοῦ πεποιημένη. (Herodian., 2.9.5–6)

> Upon receipt of the news that Pertinax had succeeded to the throne, Severus went forth and sacrificed and swore allegiance to Pertinax as emperor. Subsequently, he returned home and fell asleep with the arrival of evening. He dreamt that he saw an immense, magnificent horse decked out in imperial trappings carrying Pertinax as he made his way through the middle of the Sacred Way in Rome. When it arrived at the place where the Forum (Romanum) begins, which is where the people used to gather and hold discussions at the time of the Republic, he dreamt that the horse bucked at Pertinax and threw him off. Then the horse knelt down for Severus, who was merely standing there, and took him on its back without any trouble and stood right in the middle of the Forum (Romanum), lifting him high so that he might be seen and honored by everyone. Even to this day there stands on that spot an immense bronze statue to commemorate this dream.

Neither the precise site nor the date of the statue's erection are known, but it may not be inappropriate to associate the statue's creation with the publication of Severus' autobiography and to situate both events in context of his brief presence at Rome in 197–198, prior to departure for a campaign against the Parthians in the East.

This and other omens in which Severus was protagonist in all likelihood were reported by Severus himself in his autobiography. Truth is eminently malleable in politics. But it would have been most impolitic for Dio to attribute to Severus omens in which the emperor was protagonist, but the reality of which he refused to recognize publicly. Dio

mentions not only the dream involving the horse that threw Pertinax and accepted Severus, but also other dreams and an action that Severus inadvertently performed while awake: he dreamed of being suckled by a she-wolf; being honored by Marcus Aurelius' wife, Faustina, at his marriage to Julia Domna; seeing water gush forth from his hand; being greeted by the whole world; and accidentally sitting upon the imperial throne.[155] Faustina the Younger had been dead for a decade by the time that Severus came to marry Julia Domna, but the logic of dreams is rarely that of the waking world. More damning, perhaps, is the improbable nature of the claim that Severus was unaware of what he was doing when he sat upon the imperial throne. Since Dio began his career as a historian by writing about these omens, however, it seems more than likely that he reported what was officially claimed. Although the autobiography will have appeared after Dio's pamphlet upon the omens pointing to Severus' rise to power, the two documents are likely to have had one source in common, Severus as represented by the propaganda of his partisans and collaborators.

The heavens themselves were also invoked as witness to the imperial destiny of Septimius Severus through the horoscopes of both Severus himself and his wife, Julia Domna. According to Dio, Severus had the conjuncture of the stars at the moment of his birth depicted upon the ceilings of those rooms in the palace where he was accustomed to sit in judgment.[156] This decoration was indubitably subsequent to the tumultuous years of civil war in 193–197. But the fact of its existence and Dio's observation that not everything was revealed, lest this knowledge should be used against the emperor, is highly suggestive. According to Dio's report, Severus died at the respectable age of sixty-five, which should mean that he was born on 4 April 145.[157] According to the anonymous author of the *Historia Augusta*, however, Severus was born "in the consulate of Erucius Clarus (for the second time) and Severus," that is, in the following year,

[155] Dio, 75.3.1–3.

[156] Dio, 77(76).11.1.

[157] Dio, 77(76).17.4; J. Guey, "La date de naissance de l'empereur Septime-Sévère, d'après son horoscope," *Bulletin de la Société nationale des antiquaires de France* (1956), 33–35. It may not be insignificant that there is a similar variability of testimony for the date of Caracalla's birth. For problems of another nature, with the claim that Severus was aged eighty-nine at the time of his death (SHA, *Sept. Sev.* 22.1), see H. Brandt, "*Aetas et Senectus*. Gibt es einen Generationen- und Altersdiskurs in der *Historia Augusta*?" *Historiae Augustae Colloquium Bambergense*, eds. G. Bonamente and H. Brandt (Bari, 2007), 63–71, here 70–71.

146.[158] The cause for this error is hard to fathom[159] unless it be admitted that Severus purposely gave the wrong year when relating his birth within the autobiography. In view of the secrecy that normally attended imperial horoscopes, such behavior on Severus' part, seems most likely. Similarly, the horoscope of Julia Domna allegedly promised that she would marry a man destined for the imperial throne.[160] The context is Severus' decision to marry anew during his tenure as governor of Gallia Lugdunensis in the late 180s.[161] The source for the *Historia Augusta* was none other than Marius Maximus, or so it would seem.[162] Characteristic of Severus and the importance that contemporaries attributed to astrology, this story was in all likelihood related by Severus as well within the context of his autobiography. Not the sort of thing of which a person boasted prior to gaining the throne, horoscopes with their promises of imperial destiny might constitute useful propaganda for those already in power.

Naturally, however, the vast majority of the autobiography—which may well not have been any longer than a single book or lengthy letter[163]—was dedicated to political negotiations and military operations. Most of the *testimonia* for the autobiography concern Severus' representation of his own intentions and the character of his opponents. That need hardly surprise, for it was the behavior exhibited during the civil war that required justification and compelled Severus to write in the first instance.

Severus appears to have emphasized every conceivable fault that his opponents had and then to have added some for good measure. So, for instance, he drew attention to the advanced ages of both Pescennius Niger and Clodius Albinus. The last named was the oldest, but both men were older than Severus.[164] It is essential to remember that Severus

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[158] SHA, *Sept. Sev.* 1.3.

[159] Cf. T.D. Barnes, "The Family and Career of Septimius Severus," *Historia* 16 (1967), 87–107, here 92 n. 40.

[160] SHA, *Sept. Sev.* 3.9, *Get.* 3.1, *Alex. Sev.* 4.4; R. Syme, "Astrology in the *Historia Augusta*," *Bonner Historia-Augusta Colloquium 1972/1974* (Bonn, 1976), 298; see also Kettenhofen, *Die syrischen Augustae*, 76–79.

[161] Thomasson, *Laterculi Praesidum*, 8:15 (40).

[162] In general, see Birley, "Marius Maximus," 2678–2757; Bird, "Mocking Marius Maximus," 850–860.

[163] It may be instructive to compare the situation for Caesar's *commentarii* and Hadrian's autobiography.

[164] For the birth of Pescennius Niger *c.* 135–140, see SHA, *Pesc. Nig.* 1.3. As for the birth of Clodius Albinus, see SHA, *Clod. Alb.* 4.5; *PIR* C 1186, expressing strong reservations about the reliability of this witness, probably rightly in view of the odd nature of the synchronism (*quo anno Aelius Bassianus proconsul fuit Africae*) employed to date this event.

drew attention to this fact within a pamphlet that aimed to present a partisan vision of recent history. Thus, the seemingly innocuous report: *Ad imperium uenit natu iam grandior et maior Pescennio Nigro, ut Seuerus ipse in uita sua loquitur*. (SHA, *Clod. Alb*. 7.1: "When he [Albinus] at last attained to the Empire he was well advanced in years, for he was older than Pescennius Niger, as Severus himself relates in his *Autobiography*.") To an ancient audience, on the other hand, the first reflection would have been that of whether either was yet capable of governing the empire (*capax imperii*). Old men might well govern provinces without damage to the welfare of the state, but to entrust them with the supreme care might be to tempt fate. Without sons, both contenders risked meeting with the end of Galba or Nerva or, most recently, Pertinax.

The huge temple on the Quirinal hill, one of the largest in Rome, was in the past attributed to Serapis or Sol. A large number of Egyptian objects were found nearby, in particular near the adjacent church of San Silvestro in Quirinale, convincing most archaeologists that it was truly a Serapaeum. The construction has been attributed to Caracalla, whose brick stamps were found on bricks of the staircase/retaining wall on the west side leading up to the temple. More recently R. Santangeli-Valenzani has attributed the temple to Septimius Severus and R. Taylor to Hadrian, claiming that Caracalla may have only added the staircase at a later time.[165] The easiest solution is to attribute the Serapaeum to Septimius, and the staircase/retaining wall to Septimius' successor, Caracalla, possibly to remedy an unforeseen landslide or to complete the structure after Septimius' death. Cassius Dio (76.16.3) mentions that Septimius constructed an "immense temple" to Hercules and Dionysus. This seems to be the only temple constructed in this time that qualifies for such an epithet, being second only to the Temple of Venus and Rome, and if the staircase is included, even larger than that temple. The attribution to Hercules and Dionysus is strange and comes in the *Epitome* of Dio, in a somewhat mutilated text. Possibly by Dionysus, the *interpretatio Graeca* of Osiris/Serapis, Serapis was meant. Or possibly Caracalla converted it into a Serapaeum after Septimius' death. In any case, the autobiography should have mentioned it.

[165] R. Santangeli Valenzani, "ΝΕΩΣ ΥΠΕΡΜΕΓΕΘΗΣ. Osservazioni sul tempio di Piazza del Quirinale," *BCAR* 44 (1991–1992), 7–16 and "Hercules et Dionysus, Templum," in *Lexicon Topigraphicum Urbis Romae* III, ed. E.M. Steinby (1996), 25–26, seems to be alone in rejecting this as a temple of Serapis; R. Taylor, "Hadrian's Serapeum in Rome," *AJA* 108 (2004), 223–266.

5. Caracalla

Ever a sign of political instability or lack of confidence, autobiography was practiced by Caracalla as well as his father. Caracalla, however, did not write a work that might be termed an autobiography (*de vita sua*) in the proper sense.[166] Rather, he composed an account of his campaigns against the Parthians in the years 216–217. The murder of his brother Geta in 211, a nervous breakdown in 213, and a disastrous visit to Alexandria in 215—these were all sufficient to give cause for writing an *apologia* aimed at achieving a new consensus under his rule. But the occasion was provided by a renewal of Parthian power. Conducting a campaign in mid–216, Caracalla used a successful Roman raid upon Media as a pretext for proclaiming himself *Parthicus maximus*. For some time now he had fancied himself another Alexander the Great.[167] Perhaps it was now that, in imitation of Julius Caesar, he published a *commentarius* dedicated to the Parthian campaign. If not, then the work somehow circulated posthumously. Claiming a grandiose success, Caracalla wrote that "a lion suddenly rushed down from a mountain and fought alongside him."[168] Reality was far less impressive, with the result that his praetorian prefect felt emboldened to plot against him. Forced to take the field against the Parthians anew in the spring of 217, Caracalla was killed in the vicinity of Carrhae by his own soldiers while relieving himself.[169] The usurper Macrinus carried on the war and, after an apparently successful season, concluded a peace with the Parthians.[170] Surely, Macrinus had no interest in perpetuating the good memory of Caracalla. But it is possible that Caracalla's *commentarius de bello Parthico* was published under Elagabalus, who came to power upon the claim that he was an illegitimate son of Caracalla.[171] In any event, the work did come to circulate and was known to Dio, who had a very low opinion of its veracity.[172]

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[166] Pace H. Sidebottom, "Severan Historiography: Evidence, Patterns, and Arguments," in *Severan Culture*, eds. S. Swain, S. Harrison, and J. Elsner (Cambridge 2007), 52–82, here 55, whose great merit lies in having remarked the evidence of Dio.

[167] Dio, 78.7–8, 22.1; the adjective *philalexandrotatos* (78.9.1) is a delightful neologism.

[168] Dio, 79.1.5; cf. SHA, *Caracall.* 5.9.

[169] Dio, 79.5.2–5.

[170] Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*[2], 166.

[171] For Elagabalus, see Dio, 78.30; Herodian., 5.3; SHA, *Macrin.* 9, *Elagabal.* 2, *Caracall.* 9.2; Aur. Vict., *Caes.* 23.1, *Epit. de Caes.* 23.1; Eutr. 8.22. For Severus Alexander, see instead Herodian., 5.7.3; cf. Dio, 79.19.

[172] Dio, 79.2.

6. The Third Century after Caracalla

There is no certain trace of political autobiography, in the literary sense, to be found in the third century after the reign of Caracalla. This does not mean, however, that there were no documents that were autobiographical in nature. Autobiographical items such as speeches or letters addressed by the emperors to the Senate surely continued a tradition reaching back to the middle Republic. However, the instances that may be adduced from the *Historia Augusta* are rather questionable in terms of historical veracity. For example, there is report of an "oration" addressed by Gordian III (AD 238–244) to the Senate to inform that body of the emperor's victories in the initial stage of the campaign against the Persians in AD 244, but the absence of corroboration and the anonymous author's demonstrated penchant for invention together render it unlikely that the report is an authentic citation of an original document.[173] Inscriptions afford a more promising field, at times offering brief but incisive autobiographical commentary upon contemporary events. So, for example, the Altar of Augsburg erected by the governor of Rhaetia, M. Simplicinius Genialis, commemorates a local victory over the Iuthungi in AD 260.[174] Similarly, the tombstone of Aurelius Gaius attests to that soldier's service in various parts of the empire in the time of Diocletian (AD 284–305) and his colleagues.[175] Most spectacularly, albeit beyond the pale of the Graeco-Roman world, there is the monumental trilingual inscription of Shapur I (AD 240–272) at Naqsh-e Rustam, commemorating *inter alia* the victories achieved over three Roman emperors.[176] All of these documents, nonetheless, have no

[173] SHA, *Gordiani Tres* 27.4–8.

[174] *AE* (1993), 1231; L. Bakker, "Raetien unter Postumus—Die Siegesdenkmal einer Juthungenschlacht im Jahre 260 n. Chr. aus Augsburg," *Germania* 71 (1993), 369–386; H. Lavagne, "Une nouvelle inscription d'Augsbourg et les causes de l'usurpation de Postumus," *CRAI* (1994), 431–446; E. Schallmeyer, ed., *Der augsburger Siegesaltar Zeugnis einer unruhigen Zeit* (Saalburg, 1995); I. Koenig, "Die Postumus-Inschrift aus Augsburg," *Historia* 46 (1997), 341–354; P. Le Roux, "Armées, rhétorique et la politique dans l'Empire gallo-romain. A propos de l'inscription d'Augsbourg," *ZPE* 115 (1997), 281–290.

[175] *AE* (1981), 777; T. Drew-Bear, "Les voyages d'Aurelius Gaius, soldat de Dioclétien," in *La géographie administrative et politique d'Alexandre à Mahomet, Actes du colloque de Strasbourg 14–16 juin 1979* (Leiden, 1981), 93–141.

[176] Perhaps the most accessible version in English is that of R.N. Frye, *The History of Ancient Iran* (Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft) 3.7 (Munich, 1984).

pretense to being literature. Consequently, between the dearth of the historiographical record and the nonliterary nature of inscriptions, there is no discernible instance of third-century autobiography subsequent to that of Caracalla.

Conclusion

In the end, none of the works discussed in the foregoing pages was deemed to be useful for the schools. Failure to enter the educational curriculum meant eventual extinction.[177] Whether Priscian in fact had a copy of Trajan's [*Bella*] *Dacica* available for consultation in mid-sixth-century Constantinople may be reasonably doubted. The occasional copy might survive undisturbed and intact to capture attention at an opportune moment, arousing enough interest to result in the creation of new copies.[178] However, as a rule, too few copies at the outset assured a work's loss. Ephemeral literature, the autobiographical works that have been considered here, failed to achieve that status of classic so essential to a literary work's continued survival. Testimony to a particular set of political circumstances and intended primarily, if not exclusively, for the public at the moment, each of these five works served an immediate end rather than being aimed at a timeless audience. Hence, while they must ultimately be considered failures from a literary point of view, they do shed invaluable light upon the milieu of their production and provide insight into the cultural life of the high Principate. From these works it is clear that the classical forms of Greco-Roman autobiographical literature were thriving on the eve of the crisis that fell upon the empire in the third century AD.

[177] The isolated case of the papyrus containing the opening of Hadrian's letter to Antoninus Pius (*P. Fay.* 19) cannot suffice to show that this work was a stable part of any educational *curriculum*. Allowance must be made for the idiosyncrasies and personal tastes of teachers, who might well on occasion employ texts with which they did not expect pupils to be acquainted.

[178] For example, this seems to be the case with Pompeius Trogus' universal history, which was apparently rediscovered and epitomized at the very close of the fourth century; Syme, "The Date of Justin," 358.

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE LATE EMPIRE

Hartmut Leppin*

I. Introduction

The fourth century AD saw Christianity become the dominant religion in the Roman Empire. It was also an epoch that saw important changes in the history of autobiographical writing. Christian authors like Gregory of Nazianzus, in poems such as *De vita sua* (2.1.11) and *De rebus suis* (2.1.1),[1] or Augustine, most famous for his *Confessiones*[2] wrote texts offering traits of introspection regarded today as characteristic for modern autobiography and which, therefore, seem congenial to modern expectations.

To explain the importance of Christianity for the development of autobiography it is important to bear in mind that Gregory's *De rebus suis* and Augustine's *Confessiones* display the character of a prayer or psalm. Gregory's *De vita sua*, in which he defends his conduct in church politics in front of the population of Constantinople, ends in an invocation of the word of God (v. 1946–1949). The Christian commitment to justify one's behavior before the Creator probably entailed new forms of self-reflection, eventually manifesting themselves in literature. Yet as this

* I am very grateful to H.U. Wiemer (Erlangen) for generous help.

[1] S. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Autobiographical Poems*, ed. and trans. C. White (Cambridge, 1996); Saint Grégoire de Nazianze, *Oeuvres poétiques 1,1: Poèmes personnels II, 1,1–11*, ed. A. Tuilier and G. Bady, trans. J. Bernardi (Paris, 2004). Commentary to *De vita sua*: Gregor von Nazianz, *De vita sua. Einleitung—Text—Übersetzung—Kommentar*, ed., trans., and comm. C. Jungck (Heidelberg, 1974); cf. N.B. McLynn, "A Self-Made Holy Man: The Case of Gregory of Nazianzen," *JECS* 6 (1998), 463–483.

[2] Augustine, *Confessions*, ed., trans., and comm. J.J. O'Donnell, 3 vol. (Oxford, 1992); *Augustine. Sinner and Saint. A New Biography* (London, 2005), underlining the theological message of the work, warns against interpreting the *Confessiones* as a text intentionally written as an autobiography. E. Feldmann, "Confessiones," *Augustinus-Lexikon* 1 (1986–1994), 1134–1193 highlights the protreptical character of the work. Augustine's *Soliloquia* and *retractationes* also show autobiographical elements.

volume focuses on political autobiographies, the Christian texts as spiritual autobiographies must be excluded, although Gregory's text contains several political allusions.[3]

Non-Christian autobiographical texts are almost nonexistent, although there is obviously a range of relevant hints in the works of various authors. Several participants of Julian's Persian campaign, such as Magnus of Carrhae[4] and Eutychianus of Cappadocia,[5] wrote about this war also giving an account of their personal experiences.[6] However, they were called chronographers[7] and apparently followed the scheme of classical historiography. Even if their works may have possessed the character of historiographies, the passages in question are rather comparable to Ammianus' autobiographical passages in the *Res Gestae*, which are definitely not an autobiography.

Philagrius, Julian's *notarius* during the years 361–363, wrote a kind of journal of the Persian campaign providing military and geographic

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[3] A useful overview of autobiographical writing in the fourth century is offered by G. Misch, *A History of Autobiography in Antiquity*, 2 vol. (London, 1950; reprinted 1998), 2:539–692. The heading of the chapter is "The flowering of autobiography in Late Antiquity." For Gregory of Nazianzus: 600–624; Augustine: 625–667; A. Sizoo, *Autobiographie*, *RAC* 1 (1950), 1050–1055, cf. the intriguing remarks of A. Marcone, "Tra paganesimo e cristianesimo. Gli sviluppi dell'autobiografia nel IV secolo d.C.," in *Atti del Convegno Cristianesimo latino e cultura greca sino al sec. IV* (Rome, 1993), 97–106 = *Di tarda antichità. Scritti scelti* (Milan, 2008), ch. 11. At the beginning of the fifth century Synesius, following the example of Dion Chrysostomus, wrote a type of apology about his philosophical life with autobiographical elements; cf. Misch, *Autobiography*, 2:595–599; T. Schmitt, *Die Bekehrung des Synesios von Kyrene. Politik und Philosophie. Hof und Provinz als Handlungsräume eines Aristokraten bis zu seiner Wahl zum Metropoliten von Ptolemaïs* (Beiträge zur Altertumskunde) 146 (Leipzig, 2001), 67–119. Still valuable for the antecedents of Augustine P. Courcelle, "Antécédents autobiographiques des Confessions de Saint Augustin," *RPh* 31 (1957), 23–51.

[4] *FGrHist* 225; cf. P. Janiszewski, *The Missing Link. Greek Pagan Historiography in the Second Half of the Third Century and in the Fourth Century* AD. (The Journal of Juristic Papyrology Suppl.) 6 (Warsaw, 2006), 123–129.

[5] *FGrHist* 226, cf. Janiszewski, "The Missing Link," 130–132.

[6] These authors have mainly been analyzed under the aspect of *Quellenforschung* for Julian's campaign, cf. E. von Borries, "Die Quellen zu den Feldzügen Julians des Abtrünnigen gegen die Germanen," *Hermes* 27 (1892), 170–209; cf. F. Paschoud, "Quand parut la première édition de l'Histoire d'Eunape?," in *Bonner Historia-Augusta-Colloquium 1977/8* (Bonn, 1980), 149–162, 158 f. = *Eunape, Olympiodore, Zosime. Scripta minora* (Bari, 2006), 93–106, 100 f.; F. Paschoud, "Les fragments 8, 8a et 9 de l'ouvrage historique d'Eunape," in *Scritti classici offerti a Francesco Corsaro* (Catania, 1994), 549–560, 553–556 = *Scripta minora*, 285–291, 287–289; C.W. Fornara, "Julian's Persian expedition in Ammianus and Zosimus," *JHS* 111 (1991), 1–15.

[7] Cf. Ioh. Mal. 13.21 (252.48 f.; +6 Thurn) on Magnus; 13.23 (256.20 f. Thurn) on Eutychianus. Janiszewski classifies the works as *contemporary histories*.

information, probably styled in the tradition of the *hypomnema*. The text, perhaps intended for internal use only, must have been very dry; Libanius asked for it in order to use the notes for his works on Julian.[8] Oribasius, who was the personal physician to Julian, composed a text which was expressly called a *hypomnema*, possibly a memoir or a history of Julian, used by Eunapius in the writing of his history.[9] The character of the work remains unclear, but it cannot be classified as an autobiography any more than the works of Magnus and Euychianus.[10]

There are some clues that Julian wrote about the war he waged against the Alamans, in particular about the battle of Strasbourg in 357.[11] The work was not yet finished when Helpidius (*PLRE* 1:415) left Julian's court during the summer of 358 transporting a letter to Libanius.[12] Perhaps it was this literary treatment of his military exploits (and not only his regular reports) that provoked the derision of Constantius' courtiers (Amm. 17.11.1). Julian had a certain penchant for talking about himself and did so in many other texts, as for example in his *Letter to the Athenians* or on the *Misopogon*. However, these are primarily documents of political representation within a specific context when Julian deemed it necessary to justify his comportment.[13]

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[8] Lib., *Ep*. 1434.2. Not in *FGrHist*, cf. Janiszewski, "The Missing Link," 121–123; *PLRE* 1:693.

[9] Eun., Fr. 8 Müller = 15 Blockley; *FGrHist* 221, cf. *FGrHist* continued 4 A 7, 262 f. (*History of Julian*); cf. Janiszewski, "The Missing Link," 382–390.

[10] The same holds true for Callistus (or Callistion, *FGrHist* 223), who had joined Julian's Persian campaign and wrote a hexametrical poem about it (Janiszewski, "The Missing Link," 390–393) for Selucus of Emesa (*PLRE* 1:819), who wrote *Parthika* (*FGrHist* 780) as an eyewitness—if he is to be identified with the homonymous correspondent of Libanius (*Ep*. 1508.7; cf. Janiszewski, "The Missing Link," 136–144) and for the shadowy figure of Chrorobut-Eleazar (*FGrHist* 224) who apparently tried to *recount the events as they were perceived by both sides*, cf. Janiszewski, "The Missing Link," 132–135, 135.

[11] *FGrHist* 238 (with incomplete references; cf. the edition of Julian's works by J. Bidez and F. Cumont [Paris, 1922], n25, 160): Eun. Fr. 9 Müller = 17 Blockley; Lib., *Or*. 13.25, 18. 35; *Ep*. 35.6 (*FGrHist* 238), cf. E. von Borries, "Iulianos 26 (Apostata)," *RE* 10.1 (1918), 26–91, 69; Janiszewski, "The Missing Link," 113–116; see also Paschoud, *Scripta minora*, 290, and "Eunape, Pierre le Patrice, Zosime et l'histoire du fils du roi barbare réclamé en otage," *Mélanges en l'honneur d'Yvette Duval* (Paris, 2000), 55–63, 60 f. = *Scripta minora*, 395–402, 399. He argues that Julian treated only the battle of Strasbourg. Lib., *Ep*. 369.1, however, probably does not refer to this work but to an oration on Constantius; see H.U. Wiemer, *Libanios und Julian. Studien zum Verhältnis von Rhetorik und Politik im vierten Jahrhundert n. Chr*. (Vestigia) 46 (Munich, 1995), 20.

[12] Wiemer, *Libanios und Julian*, 22 on the base of Lib. *Ep*. 35.6.

[13] The *Letter to the Athenians* is interpreted as an autobiography by, e.g., M. Alexandre, "Fragments autobiographiques dans l'oeuvre de Julien," in *L'invention de l'autobiographie d'Hésiode à Saint Augustin*, eds. M.F. Baslez, P. Hoffmann, and L. Pernot (Etude de

II. Libanius' First Oration: On His Own Tyche

A. *Libanius' Life*[14]

The only completely preserved non-Christian autobiographical text from the fourth century is Libanius' first oration, *Life or about his* Tyche.[15] Libanius was born in AD 314[16] into an influential curial family of Antioch, at that time still an affluent city. The Syrian metropolis was among the biggest towns within the Roman Empire; several high governors (*comes Orientis* and *consularis Syriae*) were based here. During the fourth century even emperors resided in this town for several years.

The dates of Libanius' life are mostly known from his own works, the details about his youth from his highly stylized first oration only. He grew up in a wealthy and educated milieu; his family adhered to traditional religious practices. From the age of fourteen, he single-mindedly dedicated his life to the study of Greek literature and language by extensive reading and by attending the classes of an estimated teacher. He deliberately chose this way of life instead of a career in local politics or in the imperial administration, which would have fulfilled the expectations of his family. Against the will of his relatives he went to Athens in order to complete his education. Although, as he himself states, he was deeply disappointed both by teachers and students, he remained there several years (336–340). Leaving Athens, Libanius first taught in Constantino-

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literature ancienne) 5 (Paris, 1993), 285–303, 289–293, who, though, rightly points out the apologetic character of the letter.

[14] For Libanius' life, see J. Wintjes, *Das Leben des Libanius* (Historische Studien der Universität Würzburg) 2 (Rahden, 2005); see also Wiemer's thorough contributions on various aspects, namely, Libanius' social position: H.U. Wiemer, "Die Rangstellung des Sophisten Libanios unter den Kaisern Julian, Valens und Theodosius: mit einem Anhang über Abfassung und Verbreitung von Libanios' Rede für die Tempel (Or. 30)," *Chiron* 25 (1995), 89–130; for a general overview, see S.N.C. Lieu, "Libanius and Higher Education at Antioch," in *Culture and Society in Later Roman Antioch*, eds. I. Sandwell and J. Huskinson (Oxford, 2004), 13–23.

[15] Misch, *Autobiography*, 2:554–563. Autobiography is understood here as a text intended to inform about the author's life; for a much more extended concept, which is common practice among classicists, see for example M.F. Baslez, P. Hoffmann, L. Pernot, eds., *L'invention de l'autobiographie d'Hésiode à Saint Augustin* (Etude de literature ancienne) 5 (Paris, 1993); M. Reichel, ed., *Antike Autobiographien. Werke—Epochen—Gattungen* (Europäische Geschichtsdarstellungen) 5 (Cologne, 2005).

[16] For Antioch in the fourth century AD, cf. P. Petit, *Libanius et la vie municipale à Antioche au IVe siècle après J.-C.* (Paris, 1955); J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Antioch. City and Imperial Administration in the Later Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1972); B. Carbouret, P.L. Gatier, C. Saliou, eds., *Antioche de Syrie* (Topoi Suppl.) 5 (Lyon, 2004).

ple until 344, then, after a brief intermezzo, in Nicaea/Bithynia, in Nicomedia (344/5–348/9). This period he later described as the best years of his life (*Or.* 1.51). He was then required by imperial order to move his teaching to the capital, obviously receiving an imperial salary. After a short sojourn in his hometown in 353, Libanius returned from the capital to Antioch in 354, supposedly with a temporary leave, but probably already resolved to remain in Antioch. Eventually he was allowed to stay there permanently. As the official sophist, able to renounce drawing a municipal salary for himself,[17] he enjoyed immunity from curial obligations until his death, always feeling to be surrounded by envious rivals.

On many occasions Libanius was called to defend his teachings, which apparently became ever less popular with his contemporaries as many ambitious young men preferred Latin rhetoric or turned to Berytus to study law, thus furthering their career prospects in imperial administration.

The climax of his life was the sojourn of Emperor Julian in Antioch (July 362–March 363). Libanius had known him since his time in Nicomedia. They shared convictions and, despite some irritations, a close relationship emerged.[18] In the conflict between emperor and town, Libanius intervened asking the emperor's forgiveness (*Or.* 15) on the one hand, admonishing the Antiochenes on the other (*Or.* 16). Julian's death during his Persian campaign (June 363) came as a terrible blow to Libanius.

As before, his standing now largely depended on the attitude of the high magistrates residing in Antioch. In several cases Libanius encountered difficulties due to his rejection of Christianity; on the other hand, under governors (not only pagans), who respected traditional education, he enjoyed high respect in local politics. Libanius also incurred conflicts that had nothing to do with religion, as, for example, over the right of his natural son Cimon to be his heir, or his immunity. Theodosius (379–395), although deemed to be a stern Christian emperor, on several occasions showed his favor to the rhetor.[19] Nevertheless, the reactions to the tax revolt in Antioch of 387 confirmed that the local bishop was now the man expected to and capable of mitigating the emperor, not a member of the secular local elite. During the crisis Libanius was confined to writing

[17] Cf. R.A. Kaster, "The Salaries of Libanius," *Chiron* 13 (1983), 37–59; this article is also fundamental for the reconstruction of Libanius' various appointments.

[18] Wiemer, *Libanios und Julian*.

[19] Wiemer, "Rangstellung," 103–106.

speeches that he could have delivered—had he but been asked to do so.[20] Still, he continued to struggle for a role as local patron. The last years of his life were darkened by an illness, which became ever worse, and by the deaths of his concubine and his son. Libanius probably died around 393.

B. *Date and Audience of the First Oration*

The speech about his own *Tyche* is the first oration of the corpus of Libanius' speeches, which was compiled after his death.[21] This speech does not form a unified whole. Whereas the first part is very well structured and has a clear narrative order, the second part (from 156 onward) seems much more loosely written. It has an additive character giving evidence of a piecemeal composition (see 233 with Norman ad loc. 244) and has, at times, the air of a diary about it. The end is marked by a mythological example, by which Libanius tries to console his friends, showing that the enemies of Libanius are punished by Tyche.

The loose structure of the text and internal evidence prove that the first oration was written in several stages. It is by now consensus among scholars that the first version, comprising the chapters up to 155, must have been finished by 374. It is unquestionable that Libanius wrote several amendments until at least 392; however, minor details of date and composition are in dispute.[22] Although they are less satisfactory in terms of narrative quality than the first part, the additions do not change the general outlook of the author. The whole speech is written in an elegant Atticist prose.

It is difficult to say which kind of audience Libanius wrote for. The public must have consisted of people who were familiar with local conflicts in Antioch and with names of local politicians such as Libanius' foe,

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[20] D.R. French, "Rhetoric and the Rebellion of A.D. 387 in Antioch," *Historia* 47 (1998), 468–484; H. Leppin, "Steuern, Aufstand und Rhetoren: Der Antiochener Steueraufstand in heidnischer und christlicher Sicht," in *Gedeutete Realität. Krisen, Wirklichkeiten, Interpretationen (3.-6. Jh. n. Chr.)*, ed. H. Brandt (Historia ES) 134 (Stuttgart, 1999), 103–123.

[21] R. Foerster, ed., *Libanii opera 1.1* (Leipzig, 1903), 79–206 with corrections in vol. 3:xii–xxvi; comments by A.F. Norman, *Libanius' Autobiography (Oration I)* (Oxford, 1965) and J. Martin and P. Petit, *Discours t. 1. Autobiographie* (Paris, 1979). English translation by Norman, *Libanius' Autobiography* and *Libanius: Autobiography and Selected Letters*, 1 (Cambridge, 1992); French translation by Martin and Petit, *Discours*; German translation by P. Wolf, *Autobiographische Schriften* (Zurich, 1967).

[22] Norman, *Libanius' Autobiography*, XII–XIV; Martin and Petit, *Discours*, 3–7; Norman, *Autobiography and Selected Letters*, 8 f.

Eubulus.[23] Other passages, too, presuppose an insider's knowledge about Antioch (for example, 176). His remark that the best among his pupils are dead (152 f.) may be regarded as tactless if Libanius had expected his own disciples to be in the audience; on the other hand, Libanius had always felt free to castigate his pupils. In any case, the public must have been trustworthy since he, being otherwise prudent in religious matters, dares to mention his obeisance towards soothsayers, which, to say the least, was risky in late antiquity (s. pp. 445–446). Moreover, several of the high officials he attacks quite openly in his speech would still have been influential at this time. The speech, therefore, would have been known only to a circle of people close to him.[24] Libanius seems to be more careful about influential persons in the first part, which was perhaps intended to be distributed more widely and which may even have been delivered in public (cf. 12).

C. *Character of the Speech*

Although usually called an autobiography, Libanius' first oration is not an autobiography in the modern sense, which reflects on the character development of the author;[25] the reader is not confronted with that sort of critical introspection which is found in contemporary Christian autobiography. Rather, the figure of Libanius as painted by himself in the first oration possesses characteristic virtues, such as self-control, discipline, and moral authority from his youth, beginning with his decision to dedicate his life to oratory at the latest. The course of his life is influenced by his good and his bad Tyche, not by changes in his character or by a new self-conception or even by conversion. His career as an orator does not follow a line grounded in his own choices, but rather is driven by the conduct of governors treating him well or badly and by decisions of the emperors making him teach in certain places. The one thing he strives for is his return to Antioch as the official rhetor, which is eventually

[23] His identity is in dispute, see *PLRE* 1:287 f.

[24] Cf. Norman, *Libanius' Autobiography*, xvii; Martin and Petit, *Discours*, 30–36, where it is even argued that the last passages formed only a "journal intime" (33). This seems highly improbable since the last paragraphs, which refer to a consoling talk to his friends, appeals to remain confident in Tyche's benevolence, which is indirectly a kind of self-consolation.

[25] Libanius wrote a number of texts in which he speaks about himself (a selection in P. Wolf, *Autobiographische Schriften*, with the orations 1–5), but the first oration is the only text that is devoted to his life as a whole; his other orations are reactions to attacks.

conceded. Even then he stays the same, whereas the conditions and people around him are sometimes good and sometimes bad, as are the gifts of Tyche.

With few exceptions (see 235), the structure of the work simply and expectedly follows the chronological order. After a short introduction, in which he underlines that he is neither the happiest nor the most wretched man of all, Libanius tells about his home town and his family (2 f.), followed by an account of his education in Antioch and his decision for a career as an orator (4–13). In several chapters Libanius narrates his disappointments with studying in Athens, the town he had yearned for in his youth (14–29). The triumphs and conflicts of his first stay in Constantinople are described at length (30–47). In even greater detail Libanius depicts his years of success in Nicomedia (48–73), speaking with somewhat less enthusiasm about his second stay in Constantinople (74–93). Eventually, he returns after a first visit (86–92) to his home town Antioch (94). The depiction of his years of Antioch is structured in correspondence to the political conditions set by the rulers who resided in the town for any given time (Gallus, Julian, and Valens) and by the Roman magistrates based there. Among them were *consulares Syriae* and *comites Orientis*, but sometimes also military commanders. Occasionally, Libanius inserts shorter or longer digressions on a variety of topics, as for example his health or the fate of rhetoric in his time.

There is one narrative principle present in any given part of the oration: all stages of Libanius' life are divided into incidents providing evidence of happiness and those giving proof of wretchedness. Consequently, every part of his life is interpreted as a sequence of good and bad luck, with some events depicted as ambivalent in themselves. After telling his mixed experiences as a student in Athens, Libanius begins ruminating on Tyche:

> From this narrative you can get a good idea of my Týche. Thus, my ailments and the fact that, like a merchant venture, I found my ports of call to fall below expectation—highly spoken of but far different in experience—all this can be placed on the debit side. Yet that my winter sailing weather was no worse than that of summer, and that what occurred was not what I intended but resulted from duress—these are the favours of Týche.[26]
>
> (18)

[26] Translations follow with minor alterations A.F. Norman's texts (*Libanius' Autobiography* or *Autobiography*, which is not always better than the elder version).

More typically, however, Libanius connects completely different occurrences, which simply took place at the same time. After describing an accident which had almost killed him and the death of a valuable slave, Libanius continues in the following way:

> So this summer passed, and a wretched one it was, I know. Then another disaster befell me. A second slave, who along with the first used to assist me and who, after the other's death, did his best for me, went off into the country to get married. There intolerable heat and bad water brought on a sickness, and on his return he died. At this the gods time and again heard me lament, "Alas, ye Gods!" However, I had occasion to thank Týche once more for making a laughing stock of Carterius[27] and his toadies. (185 f.)

The synchronism puts together personal losses and the triumph in a conflict with the governor.

Libanius feels virtually an obligation to bring up both aspects for every event in his life. Even for his stay in Nicomedia, which he calls the best time of his life (51), he thinks it indispensable to mention misfortunes:

> My troubles were small because of my many pleasures; in fact nothing was enough to cause me distress, just as, with great champions, their mishaps seem mere nothings because of the greatness of their achievements. So let me mention my misfortunes, for good fortune can be more clearly revealed so, if there is an account of what it has overcome. (60, cf. 117)

Sometimes what had seemed to be unfortunate proves to be good fortune in the end, as was the case with Libanius' expulsion from Constantinople where he returned triumphantly after his successes in Nicomedia:

> The report of these orations and occurrences reached those from whom I had fled and who thought that by their calumnies they would make it impossible for me to live in towns or even in the tiniest villages. Could Tellus or those Argive youths, who blessed their mother by their exploit with the carriage, have had greater happiness than I? I am tempted to absolve Týche of the charge I levelled against her for causing all this, if such are the results of putting her to the test. Certainly, Melanthus was not unlucky in his exile, since it was destined that instead of being a dweller in Messene he should be ruler of Athens. (73, cf. 78)

As the vicissitudes of Tyche are examined in every passage of the speech, the oration does not fall apart despite its loose structure. It is not a homogeneous speech, but it is consistent in its own way.

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[27] Carterius (*PLRE* 1:182) had tried to install a rival teacher to Libanius in Antioch.

D. *Main Subjects*[28]

1. *Professional Career*

As mentioned above, a modern reader who expects an autobiography to shed light on the development of a character will be disappointed by Libanius' oration. He will be sometimes even surprised by what is included as well as by what is excluded. Libanius rarely expresses considerations about his aims or doubts regarding his way of life. There are only a few passages where Libanius seems to hesitate: One case in point is Libanius' account of his alternation between the love for a friend and for his mother (59); he finally returns to her after leaving his friend. The other relates to the time after Julian's death. Libanius considers committing suicide, but then he remembers that Plato disapproved of seeking relief in such a manner and that Julian would reprimand him in the other world, because one has to wait "for orders from heaven" (135).[29]

Moreover, there are very few hints on personal feelings although several chapters treat his family history, especially his relationship to his mother. Even the fact that his father died when he was a child (6) is subsumed under his scheme of good and bad fortune:

> In which category, then, shall I put my orphan's state? Gladly would I have beheld my father in his old age, but of one thing I am certain—that if my father had come to a ripe old age, I would now be engaged upon a very different way of life. If you compare the present with the might-have-been—a career in local politics, for instance, or law, or even in the imperial administration—you would have no difficulty in discovering on which side I would have to put this. (6)

Evidently, Libanius has chosen the better way although he shies away from explicitly attributing his father's death to good Tyche. It is to be reckoned among those strokes of fate which have a positive result in the end.

Another important figure is his (younger) maternal uncle Phasganius,[30] who gets his mother to allow him to study in Athens (13). Later on he paves the way for Libanius' return to Antioch (95) and makes use of his

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[28] Readers should keep in mind that I will not be reconstructing Libanius' historical career in this chapter; I will be dealing with his self-representation or self-fashioning in his first speech, discussing only those events in detail that are important for an understanding of Libanius' rhetorical strategy. As a result, comparisons with other speeches are kept to a minimum.

[29] Cf. also 28.

[30] Wintjes, *Das Leben des Libanius*, 48–50.

influence to help Libanius settle down in his home town (110, 116). Libanius thinks it necessary to put emphasis on his love for his mother (58 f.: 86 cf. the somehow inappropriate aside in 214). Perhaps he is answering accusations that he had left her alone while going abroad in order to study. Her death occurred soon after his uncle's demise. Libanius is grief-stricken because they could no longer share his happiness about his professional success (117 f.), referring even to this incident in virtue of his professional career.

In a long passage Libanius speaks about a stroke suffered by his younger brother and his fate until death; here he is emotional in an unusual way (197–204, 213). Other accidents of blood relatives are also brought up, insofar as they have a bearing on Libanius' Tyche.

The orator mentions marriage offers he has declined (12, 54) and speaks about the death of his cousin, whom he was about to marry (95), but he does not narrate how he got to know his concubine, whose death he bewails in words which still show that he regarded her as an inferior: "Instead of having a woman who would run to my side, now I could only call" (278, cf. 280).

His concubine's slave origin posed a thorny problem for Libanius. It was very difficult under late antique law to name his natural son Cimon as his legitimate heir. Libanius speaks about the fight for his son's rights in great detail (145, 195 f., 278 f.; 283, cf. 257 on his immunity) and also laments the fact that his son could not become a *consularis* because of his mother's low status (231). Again the modern reader will be surprised that Libanius does not mention a word about the birth of the child and his growing up. Another important part of the household was formed by slaves, especially by his personal servants. The loss of slaves is reckoned among his mishaps and even described in some detail (184 f.; probably 232 on his secretary), otherwise slaves are either simply present fulfilling their duty, or not.

In summary, what Libanius tells us of his family mainly concerns problems of organization and less emotional issues. Family matters seem to be important only when they contribute to demonstrate Libanius' public standing or when they have an impact on his career. Insofar his digressions about the defense of his estates are also justified (26 f., 58) because property was a basis for his public role in Antioch. It would, however, be problematic to use such observations as evidence for a lack of emotionality in Libanius. The speech is not a document of authentic writing as modern diaries pretend to be, but a text of self-representation in a world where people probably were not expected to talk about such things.

It would not be adequate either to take the remarks about Libanius' health, on which he expounds at length in this speech (e.g., 9 f., 139–143, 242 f., 244–250, 268), as evidence for a hypochondriac character. On the one hand, we simply do not know how grave Libanius' illness was. On the other hand, he conceives his health as being important at least in two ways: it is a manifest sign of good or bad Tyche (268), and good health is a necessary precondition to exercise his profession:

> My hands and feet had failed me as they had never done before, but by the grace of heaven, my oratory stayed upon my lips as before, and this was what prevented my enemies setting up a howl of triumph. Though I was unable to appear in the lecture room, I duly fulfilled my duties towards my students. (280)

Besides, speaking about health was established among sophists and orators at least since the time of Aelius Aristides.[31] A similar theme are accidents (e.g., 183 f., 216 f.), which certainly show bad Tyche, but good Tyche insofar as Libanius survives the calamities.

Although the choice of themes in Libanius' first speech is less arbitrary than it may seem at first glance, Libanius as a conscious writer expects his readers to be irritated by some elements of his account. After narrating the loss and subsequent regaining of a manuscript with Thucydides' history, he comments: "Let him who likes laugh at me for making a mountain out of a mole hill. I have no regard for the laughter of boors" (150). His intended public knows to appreciate his deep respect for cultural tradition.

Up to the last amendment, the central theme of the speech remains Libanius' professional career as an orator, as a representative of *paideia*, which his uncle had already foretold when Libanius was in his youth (5). All the important stages are specified, his successes are highlighted again and again. In accordance with the general purpose of his work, he also mentions his failures (obviously not caused by his own mistakes) and those people who lack in admiration for him.

Rivalries with other orators are a further subject of his speech (e.g., 39–44, 67–72, 186 f.), and Libanius does not shy away from reviling them in fierce words or from uttering cries of triumph about their misfortunes. A case in point is Gerontius (*PLRE* 1:393), one of his former pupils,

[31] See, e.g., M. Horstmannshoff, "Aelius Aristides: A Suitable Case for Treatment," in *Paideia. The World of the Second Sophistic*, ed. B.E. Borg (Millennium-Studien) 2 (Berlin, 2004), 277–290.

who had made every effort, including a visit to court in Constantinople, in order to become the official teacher in rhetoric in Antioch, but was packed off home in disgrace: "He came up here at dead of night, in fear of returning to his own city which had barred her gates against him by her decrees, and he was compelled to approach me, the teacher whom he had wronged, and to beg my assistance" (187). Modern readers may be taken aback by the malice here, and this seems to be not only a modern stance. Libanius thinks it at least appropriate to defend his triumphant way of commenting on the fate of his foes: "Let it not be thought that I go counter to Homer's maxim forbidding boasting over the fallen, for it is in no spirit of gloating that I shall mention this; rather my intention is not to leave even this aspect of *Týche's* favours unmentioned" (146).

In accordance with his concept, he speaks about the development of his school time and again,[32] also dealing with the fate of his pupils who are like sons to him (151). He prides himself on their success (215) and complains that he is bereft of the best of them (152 f., cf. 218). One pupil is unjustly put on trial, but eventually acquitted (239–241), another pupil sues Libanius' son and the rhetor himself unfairly (257).[33] Thus, his pupils' fate also illustrates the mixture of good and bad Tyche in his life.

Yet Libanius has something more in mind than his personal experiences. Libanius' own life is the embodiment of more general developments. The homage paid to him reflects the esteem of Greek rhetoric in general. He defends his art, although he feels that rhetoric is in a crisis:

> It is also part of my misfortune that I sat giving lessons in rhetoric while rhetoric is sick, disparaged and reviled and your hopes are pinned on other men. If you do not know what these hopes are, you would need an instructor. As things are, you know well enough those whom you count the lucky ones—the men with the money—and the unlucky ones, too,—the men of culture. (154)

This is said in the last passages of the first part of the oration, written under Valens' reign.

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[32] P. Wolf, *Vom Schulwesen der Spätantike. Studien zu Libanius* (Baden-Baden, 1952); P. Petit, *Les étudiants de Libanius. Un professeur de faculté et ses élèves au Bas Empire* (Etudes Prosopographiques) 1 (Paris, 1957); R. Cribiore, *The School of Libanius in Late Antique Antioch* (Princeton, 2007).

[33] For this conflict with Thrasydaeus, cf. *Or.* 32.

In the more recent parts of his speech, Libanius specifies various circumstances worrying him at this time: The misconduct of his students at school weighs heavily on his mind (241 f.). People prefer to learn Latin instead of Greek because it seems to enhance career prospects (214 f., 234); there is even an attempt to install a Latin teacher in Antioch (255 f.). In certain periods, governors and their staff are no longer in his audience (254). And yet Libanius does not give up hope: there are still governors who decide to renovate the tradition by attending his performance (267, cf. 234). In the end, a mythical narration seems to foretell that Libanius' pains will be avenged. Thus, despite all the ups and downs the general outlook is not pessimistic.[34]

2. *Politics*

Libanius was a local notable with contacts in Constantinople that he chiefly maintained by writing letters. Being the incumbent of the chair of rhetoric in Antioch, the orator had a privileged position in his town enjoying immunity from curial service, although he claims to be entitled to attend meetings of the *curia* as the scion of an old curial family.[35] While he is proud to be an Antiochene, he rarely mentions the populace of Antioch and scarcely speaks about his relationship with the *curia* of his town. What is important to him is his relationship with the bakers of the town, for whom he acts as patron (205–210, 226–230).[36] His oration does not focus on the mundane business of local politics, with the exception of times of crisis when Libanius intervenes by virtue of his personal authority. The stress is placed much more on his dealings with governors.[37]

The qualities of governors manifest themselves in their attitude toward rhetoric. Two characteristic examples may give an impression of Libanius' outlook. First, the good governor. Under him:

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[34] See also the chapter on religion pp. 442-448.

[35] Wiemer, "Rangstellung," 115 f.

[36] H.U. Wiemer, "Der Sophist Libanios und die Bäcker von Antiocheia," *Athenaeum* 74 (1996), 527–548.

[37] For Libanius' conception of his role in politics, cf. B. Schouler, "Le rôle politique de l'école au temps de Libanios," in *Antioche de Syrie*, eds. B. Cabouret, P.L. Gatier, and C. Saliou (Topoi Suppl.) 5 (Lyon, 2004), 97–115; for his attitude to governors, see B. Cabouret, "Le gouverneur au temps de Libanius, image et réalité," *Pallas* 60 (2002), 191–204. It is difficult to assess his real influence: Wintjes, *Das Leben des Libanius*, is optimistic that Libanius was able to use his contacts to gain power, whereas Wiemer, *Libanios und Julian*, is rather more skeptical. He wrote two speeches about the behavior toward governors (*Or.* 51 f.).

> both I and my oratory were in high esteem. My declamations were held, in the time-honoured fashion, before the governor. He was a man well able to dispense justice fairly, and his authority, based on clemency, was more effective than that of others who relied on executions. He inspired affection in all—individuals and families, cities and provinces, councillors, commons and peasantry alike.[38]

The bad governor is, as expected, virtually the opposite: "Then there arrived another governor, and with him raging temper, fearful panic, wanton brutality, utter recklessness in word and deed, and tyrannical administration of the law."[39] Libanius' standing is thus inextricably bound up with the fate of a greater community. His town flourishes when rhetoric enjoys support. Typically, supporters of *paideia* are also adherents to religious traditions, but Libanius knows that this is not always the case. There are Christian governors who appreciate Libanius' art and yet, on the other hand, there is Proclus who, although a pagan, does not lend his support to Libanius (221 f.).

As mentioned above, many paragraphs of Libanius' oration consist of narrations about a long series of governors who interestingly are often not even mentioned by their names, but only by their offices. Libanius expects them and their staff to attend his lectures on invitation (169, cf. 251). He is proud to be asked to deliver an oration and mentions the praise he receives for his performance (232, 283).

In general, Libanius feels entitled to be treated with special regard by them, for instance to be visited at his house as a sign of social respect (211). On the other hand, he himself did not feel obliged to call on them. A friend of his is made to explain this conduct to an ill-wishing governor, who is astonished by the absence of the orator: "It was not my way to visit them [sc. the governors] anymore than theirs to visit me: only to my well-wishers did I pay such a compliment, and those who did not wish me well I ignored completely" (168). As in late antiquity inferiors were normally due to pay visits to persons of higher social rank, this remark is a sign of extreme self-confidence: Libanius sees himself on the same level as the governors and feels free to decide how to behave toward them. When he grows older, he even sees himself

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[38] 267. It is uncertain whether Iullus (*PLRE* 1:485) or Timocrates (*PLRE* 1:915) is meant.

[39] 269. The governor is to be identified with Lucianus (*PLRE* 1:516 f.). For Libanius' attitude toward him, which he perhaps wants to conceal with his polemic, see O. Seeck, "Libanius gegen Lucianus," *RhM* 73 (1924), 84–101.

in the role of the governor's father, at least in the case of the *comes Orientis* Icarius (*PLRE* 1:455) who seems to be a "nursling of the Muses" (225).[40]

With a praetorian prefect, who as an *illustris* was higher ranking than the *consulares* and even the *comites*, it was a different case. This is evidenced by the passages in which Libanius describes his dealings with the praetorian prefect Strategius (*PLRE* 1:611 f.) who had been appointed to reestablish order in Antioch after the downfall of Gallus (106–116). Libanius takes it for granted that he has to go to see Strategius (107 f.). However, when Strategius asks for an extended oration in his honor, which Libanius had promised him in case he attained the office of the praetorian prefect, the orator makes an unusual demand of him:

> I said that I would settle my debt if he left his quarters and came to listen to my oration in the bouleutérion, for this would be something without parallel for the prefect to do, and it would form the first part of my speech that he had honoured eloquence so. He agreed to do me this honour, though most people would not believe it, but attend he did; and when the length of the speech required a second attendance, he did so again, and similarly, a third time. And now it is on everyone's lips about us both, the speaker and his auditor, and about the speech and the whereabouts in the city it took place. (112)

Even against such a high official Libanius is capable of asserting himself.[41]

Concerning officials of lower standing, Libanius allows himself to take an attitude of defiance: "He [sc. Tisamenus, a consularis; *PLRE* 1:916 f.] stayed unacquainted with my oratory, for I did not think him fit for such a privilege. Anyhow, this was one of his punishments" (251).[42] Yet the orator knows that many of the magistrates do not appreciate his assertiveness and will never come up to his expectations, even if they are well-wishing.

On the other hand, in late antiquity it was legitimate, and even a social obligation, for the representatives of *paideia* to speak out frankly in front of the governor and to face angry governors. This virtue was called *parrhesia* (frankness).[43] Personal contacts led to personal influence, thus

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[40] Libanius composed four orations about him (26–29), which reveal growing disillusion with Icarius whose deficits are also apparent in the narrative of Libanius' first oration (225–230).

[41] On another occasion Libanius was less successful; see 180.

[42] Tisamenus is attacked in *Or.* 33.

[43] P. Brown, *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity: Towards a Christian Empire* (Madison, Wisc., 1992). In this regard Libanius continues his family tradition (2).

making *parrhesia* possible, and Libanius enjoys telling about his power: "I helped various friends of mine, parents of boys in my charge, by assuaging the governor's anger, and I even got one released from prison and enabled him to return home" (232; cf., e.g., 106–108). However, to use personal influence for a friend was an ambivalent issue as the question how to maintain contact with officials was always a difficult one:

> From Archelaus (who enjoyed influence at court, cf. *PLRE* 1:100) I received many tokens of esteem; in fact, he felt that he should visit me for an interview as a mark of such esteem—an unprecedented course for him to take—but I got wind of it and forestalled it by simply requesting the old man to stay where he was. His nephew, however, I must admit was my visitor. (166)

Libanius has to find a balance between the necessity to entertain intense relations with high-ranking officials on the one hand, and the easily arising suspicion of bribery or favoritism on the other hand. Personal calls of governors to private people, which Libanius valued so much, even seem to have been restricted somehow by law (211). The orator sets great store by his principle to ask only for "favours which a governor can grant without harm to the law" (107) and that people who benefitted from his intercession do not have to pay for it (109). However, as there were also bad governors, some interventions were not successful: "When I had spoken to him [Eustathius, *PLRE* 1:311 f.] in support of a pupil of mine, a poor orphan boy, who had the duty of providing the fires for the public baths, then he was overwhelmed with anger. His eyes blazed and he rubbed his nose and shouted, 'Leave me to govern. You don't give me a chance now' " (272, cf. 251).[44] Dealing with governors was always a tricky business, and failure was painfully embarrassing.

In addition to supporting friends, an orator was expected to raise his voice for his home town—in other words, to act as a patron for the whole community. On several occasions Libanius prides himself on supporting the cause of the Antiochenes in critical situations.[45] Food crises were a recurrent phenomenon in late antique towns, even in such prosperous ones as Antioch; they often triggered revolts against the *curia* or even against the governor, who were held responsible for maintaining

[44] As indicated in the first oration (271 ff.), Eustathius was at first greeted with enthusiasm by Libanius (*Or.* 44) but heavily attacked later on (*Or.* 54).

[45] The word παρρησία itself features only rarely in the speech; see 126, 223. (In 7 the word has another connotation.)

fair bread prices. Libanius, as the patron of the bakers, has to act here, always maintaining that he is only considering the common good of the town.

In 382 Philagrius (*PLRE* 1:693), then *comes Orientis* residing in Antioch, was having several bakers flogged in order to regain popularity because the populace was convinced that they had been bribed in order to keep bread prices high. At this moment Libanius walked onto the stage:

> He (sc. the governor) had already reached his seventh victim, when I approached in all ignorance, following my usual path. I heard the sound of the lash, so dear to the common folk who were agog at the sight of the bleeding backs, and I saw a painful spectacle, unbearable to my eyes, but it did not deter me. Straightway I parted the crowd with my own hands, and advanced to the wheel, silent and reproachful. There I spoke long and loud, concentrating on two points of time, first, that those whom he was flogging had done no wrong, and second, that if he did not abate his wrath, he would see a morrow such as he would not wish to see. My arguments were justified and in the best interests of both the governor and the city, but meant death to the author of them—such was the opinion of all present—for they run counter to the will of the populace. And, in fact, many of them had stones in their hands, in case anyone tried to present any plea for these people (sc. the bakers), and it was a marvel that they were not hurled at me when I first began to speak. Then followed another marvel, brought about by some divine power and by *Týche* who can lull even the raging sea, that those who had been so recently appeased did not themselves join in supporting my advocacy. As a result it was I who was called the benefactor (*euergétes*) of all—of the victims who were rescued from the lash, of the governor who escaped a lynching, of the citizens who did not starve, and of the fabric of our city, since it did not go up in flames. (208–210)

With this narration, Libanius celebrates his personal courage and his position as a selfless benefactor of his town.[46]

During another food crisis Libanius seems to have mediated successfully between the bakers, who had decamped fearing a flogging, and the governor. Soon later, there is enough bread in town again: "I venture to assert that, with Týche's aid, it was I who brought this to pass. Therefore I was judged to have been of more service to the city than its local magistrates, for while they went to expense upon a city that was intact, I had been instrumental in saving it" (227). This passage indicates the rivalries between the elites of Antioch. In contrast to the *curiales*, Libanius as the public teacher was not obliged to perform liturgies; therefore he had to find a different approach to bring to light his merits for his town. In all

[46] For this affair, cf. Wiemer, "Bäcker von Antiocheia", 531–533.

his pride for his achievements, Libanius does not completely conceal that he is not always successful, but he knows that eventually Tyche will help him (e.g., 229 f.).

The emperors and their dealings are not among the main subjects of Libanius' first oration, although he occasionally refers to his contacts with the imperial court, which he maintains thanks to certain people he knows there (e.g., 36, 94, 166). Yet on some occasions the emperors, who, like the governors, are often mentioned without names, assume influence on Libanius' life even without being involved personally. Constantine (306–337) is not mentioned here as he did not affect Libanius' life immediately.[47] There was obviously no personal encounter between Constantius II (337–361) and the orator, but the emperor exercised an influence on his career at several stages. He is the ruler who requests Libanius to stay in Constantinople although he is not paid by the imperial treasury (37); he also honors him with generous donations (80). Later on, he concedes the orator a leave of four months to visit Antioch (86) and is eventually persuaded to allow him to return temporarily for medical reasons (94 f.). Although Libanius makes clear that there is religious pressure on the pagans in the times of Constantius (see below 446-447), in one passage only he alludes to the Christian stance of the ruler (39); but he does so, characteristically, while speaking about his rivalry with another orator, Bemarchius,[48] who as a pagan had delivered a panegyric on Constantius for building a church.[49] The main aspect of Constantius' rule remains his impact on the career of the Antiochene.

With Gallus, who resided as Constantius' *Caesar* in Antioch (351–354), personal encounters were unavoidable for a person of Libanius' standing and ambitions.[50] It is well known that Gallus came into conflict

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[47] M. Raimondi, "Bemarchio di Cesarea, panegirista di Costantino e Costantinopoli. Per una reinterpretazione di Libanio Or. I 39; 41," *Rivista storica dell'Antichità* 33 (2003), 171–199, 184 thinks that the words *he who set himself up against the gods* in 39 refer to Constantine. However, the context makes clear that Christ must be meant (see Norman, *Libanius' Autobiography*; *Autobiography and selected letters*; Martin and Petit, *Discours*, ad l.).

[48] For recent discussions of Bemarchius (*PLRE* 1:160), cf. Raimondi, "Bemarchio di Cesarea," who argues that Libanius is implicitly criticizing Themistius; Janiszewski, "The Missing Link," 371–380; I. Sandwell, *Religious Identity in Late Antiquity. Greeks, Jews and Christians in Antioch* (Cambridge, 2007), 117 f.

[49] It is well known that Libanius also delivered a panegyric on Constantius (*Or.* 59), but this did not include any remarks on church building.

[50] Libanius, as an Atticist, does not distinguish between *Augustus* and *Caesar*, but calls both of them *basileis*.

with the citizens of Antioch.[51] Ammianus draws a detailed, if somewhat stylized, picture of the despotic rule exercised by Gallus and his wife (14.1.9). Even letters from Libanius testify to the atmosphere of anxiety predominating in Antioch,[52] which he also describes in his speech, albeit he apparently did not suffer personally from the tyrannical rule ascribed to Gallus: "The whole community was tempest-tossed by the murderous anger of the emperor Gallus. Some were dead already, others he had arrested for execution, all were men of parts" (96). On the other hand, he himself spoke before the emperor, a fact he does not conceal, although he underlines that he did it "unwillingly and fearfully" and only in order to temper Gallus' rage (97). Libanius himself is charged with magical practices, but Gallus directs the accuser to the judicial courts (98 f.)—which, by the way, shows that Gallus did not behave like a tyrant in every regard. The Caesar even approaches Libanius, who is then in his hometown only on leave, to remind him that he has to return to Constantinople (100). The main subject for those years, though, is not Gallus' rule in general, but Libanius' career and his prospects of becoming the official teacher in Antioch, which are hampered by local rivals although his audience is growing at a steady course (96–103).[53] What becomes clear from these passages is that Libanius did not really suffer under the rule of Gallus; on the contrary, he was even capable of advancing his own career, which presumably made him vulnerable in the eyes of his adversaries. Therefore, in his oration Libanius sees it as expedient to make every effort in order to convey the impression that he was almost a victim of Gallus.

With Julian, Libanius entertained a relationship that he himself defines as close.[54] When Julian comes to the throne, Libanius felt relieved from the depression about his mother's demise (118):

> I laughed and danced, joyfully composed and delivered my orations, for the altars received their blood offerings, smoke carried the savour of burnt sacrifice up to heaven, the gods were honoured with their festivals, which

[51] Cf. B. Bleckmann, "Constantina, Vetranio und Gallus Caesar," *Chiron* 24 (1994), 29–68, esp. 59–67; P.L. Malosse, "Enquête sur les relations entre Julien et Gallus," *Klio* 86 (2004), 185–196; K. Rosen, *Julian. Kaiser, Gott und Christenhasser* (Stuttgart, 2006), 80–112.

[52] 283.3 from 259/60; 391 from 355.

[53] There are chronological problems in this chapter; see Norman, *Libanius' Autobiography*, 173.

[54] Fundamental is Wiemer, *Libanios und Julian*, on the first oration 349–353.

> only a few old men were left to remember, the art of prophecy came again into its own, that of oratory to be admired; Romans plucked up heart, and barbarians were either vanquished or soon to be so. (119)

However, many difficulties were to emerge during Julian's reign in Antioch.

As in the case of Gallus, it is not easy for Libanius to give a convincing narrative of the emperor's stay in Antioch because Julian was at loggerheads with most of the Antiochenes. He underlines that Julian is eager to listen to his speeches from the beginning (120); nevertheless, Libanius is not willing to be included in the group of his flatterers. Thus, he does not attend to the emperor's sacrifices, a fact which earns him a delicate reproof (121 f.). It even leads to the impression among other people that Libanius was out of favor (123), until Julian and Libanius agree that Libanius will only come to the emperor when invited, otherwise keeping in contact through letters.

However, the contacts seem to have aroused suspicions in Antioch, against which Libanius apparently saw the need of defending himself:

> I asked for nothing—for none of his treasure, for no villa, estate or office. That business about Aristophanes was an oration to ensure that a man who was no rogue should not be regarded as one, and this prompted the offer of an official post to him, but I did not think it proper to accept anything, though a large part of my grandfather's estate was among his possessions.[55] (125)

In consequence, Julian concludes that Libanius loves him not for his wealth but for himself alone. Libanius in turn interprets this as the base for the frankness he can show facing the emperor, who is not completely flawless,[56] in another food crisis. As in other episodes of this kind, the orator underlines how dangerous the situation was for him, in this case because Julian's flatterers are attacking him and Julian himself seems to be driven by a demon (126).

Julian holds him in even higher esteem after this intervention and asks him to deliver a panegyric on the occasion of his consulate—the reader is obviously expected to learn that Libanius is not to be counted among those people who had to offer speeches by themselves. His speech is the last one in a long series and Julian shows his enthusiasm by leaping up

[55] See Lib., *Or.* 14 on Aristophanes.

[56] Especially if compared with other orations of Libanius; cf. Wiemer, *Libanios und Julian*, 351 f.

from his seat and spreading wide his cloak—a behavior that was criticized by contemporaries as not befitting his royal status, but is defended by Libanius with a characteristic argument: "For what is more royal than that an emperor should be uplifted to the glory of eloquence?" (129). Again the idea comes up that eloquence gives rise to social eminence surpassing other dignities.

It is well known that Julian, being disillusioned by Antioch, threatened to transfer his residence to Tarsus. Libanius' ambivalent role in the relationship between home town and emperor is clarified by the words he puts in Julian's mouth after having him pronouncing his threat: " 'I have no doubt that you will react to this,' he went on, 'by pinning your hopes upon him [sc. Libanius] who will be your envoy, yet he too will have to go there with me.' Then without a tear he embraced me in my tears, with his gaze now fixed on the ruin of Persia" (132). It is evident that Libanius makes an effort to give the impression that, although being an adherent of Julian, he was expected even by the emperor to stand up for his town.[57] After Julian's end, Libanius considers suicide, not the least because "I felt it my duty to honour the fallen with funeral orations" (135).[58]

Jovian (363/4) comes in for short shrift by Libanius (134). Under his reign, Libanius is accused because he "never ceased to bewail the fate of the fallen Julian." However, he is saved thanks to the intervention of a Cappadocian who reminds the emperor of the importance of Libanius' art (138).[59]

Valens (364–375), under whom the first part of the oration was finished, is a central figure in Libanius' account. Obviously, they had no personal contacts; Libanius never entertained such a close relationship to him as Themistius, his rival from Constantinople, enjoyed, who even gave a famous oration in Antioch, which seems to have influenced the emperor's behavior.[60] An oration on Valens by Libanius, on the other hand, goes to such lengths that it had to be interrupted and *de facto*

[57] In fact, he wrote a speech to Julian defending his town (*Or.* 15). Wiemer, *Libanios und Julian*, underlines the apologetic traits in this passage.

[58] Which he did: see Lib., *Or.* 17 and 18.

[59] It is difficult to understand the reply that Libanius puts in his supporter's mouth: "Now, how would you feel, for him (sc. Libanius) to lie slain, while the living words, which he has written about you, go everywhere?" Norman, *Libanius' Autobiography* and Martin and Petit, *Discours*, ad l. interpret the words as referring to negative comments by Libanius about Jovian. Yet should we exclude the possibility of Libanius trying to recommend himself to the emperor by a panegyric, as many others did? The orator has not been accused of criticising Jovian, but of mourning for Jovian.

[60] Socr., *HE* 4.32; Soz., *HE* 6.36.6–6.37.1.

stopped completely by Libanius' enemies (144)—a rather less than polite act. The last two paragraphs of the first version of the speech convey the impression that Libanius was very unhappy with his situation under Valens. He seems to encourage himself to believe in Tyche's benevolence.

His criticism against Valens and his magistrates is more open in the following, more recent paragraphs, most likely written after the death of Valens, which begin with a sharp polemic against two officials (156–162): although Libanius keeps his distance to the emperor (170), Valens, however, is not characterized in a completely negative way. As often the case in late antique *Kaiserkritik*, the criticism does not focus on the emperor himself, but on his advisers:

> The fact that, after Procopius' death, he did not execute the tyrant's friends argued that he was a decent person. The execution of my friend Andronicus was more the work of that sly fox Hierius than of the emperor whom he deceived. Yet just when he thought that, by his clemency, he had bought himself security, he found more treason in Fidustius and those whom he roused to conspire against the throne. So the emperor proceeded at first against the culprits, but there were added to the list names of men completely innocent of such a crime. Every soothsayer was his foe: so was any who, in the desire to learn from heaven something of his own fortunes, had recourse to this art, for it was hard to believe that, with a soothsayer handy, his services would not be employed on matters of greater moment. (171)

Still, bad advisers are a symptom of bad rule.

Libanius does not paint the gruesome picture Ammianus famously gives of the *maiestas* trials (cf. 29.1 f.), but he illustrates the mood of diffidence that had grasped Antioch under Valens. Yet, as under Gallus, Libanius does not seem to have been among the victims. He mentions that he is suspected of having composed a panegyric on the usurper Procopius, which is still in his possession (163). However, no trial follows.[61] Nevertheless Libanius tries to create the impression that he, too, was in actual danger. The following remark is characteristic: "Valens had an idea, and my enemies had fostered it, that I would certainly be implicated by the statements of one of those subjected to examination. It is said that he personally asked Irenaeus whether I was party to the plot and was surprised to hear that I was not" (172). Although an atmosphere of danger is described in this account which, by the way, is based on mere rumours, *de facto* Libanius is not even interrogated by the emperor and his people. The orator also praises himself for courageously

[61] For the background, cf. Wintjes, *Das Leben des Libanius*, 168.

asking a soothsayer for help (173) and does not forget to mention that his correspondence "could have provided a handle for informers, but by the favour of *Týche* this menace was removed quite easily" (175). The emperor even makes an attempt to install a rival teacher in Antioch, who, however, ends up ruining his promotion by his own machinations (186 f.).

Under Theodosius (379–395) the last passages of the speech were written. The emperor is duly praised by Libanius as a man who appreciates his art (220) and confirms his privileges (258). In his fight against intrigue, Libanius relies on his esteem at court. When on one occasion letters with an accusation against him are sent to Constantinople, the emperor and the praetorian prefect "both read them and laughed in scorn, since my conduct sufficed to repel the charge" (265). Still, there was no intense contact: Although Libanius imagines Theodosius as expressing his will to visit Antioch on his account, no personal encounter between Libanius and Theodosius—who never visited Antioch—is attested.

To conclude: Though several emperors are alluded to and even characterized in his speech, Libanius remains true to his concept of speaking about the impact of Tyche on his own life: the emperors are discussed insofar as they exert influence on his career in a favorable or in an unfavorable way. Consequently, wars and foreign politics are almost completely omitted. For the reign of Constantius II there is a passing remark on his Persian war (66).[62] Only Julian's successes are praised in a panegyric formula (119), and Libanius pays tribute to his Persian expedition in vague and flattering words (131–135). This sort of restraint does not show that Libanius was lacking in awareness of the importance of external problems of this kind, but it confirms that Libanius consistently keeps to his plan of writing about his Tyche.

It is obvious that Libanius managed not to be affected by the tyrannical violence ascribed to some emperors such as Gallus and Valens by local tradition (which manifested itself particularly in Ammianus). All the same, in every case the orator strives to demonstrate that he suffered nearly the same fate as the victims. Thus, on some occasions his speech turns to an apology, which must have been mainly of importance to the local audience that presumably was well aware of the criticism directed against the flexible, if not opportunistic, behavior shown by Libanius toward the emperors.

[62] Cf. his remark on the downfall of usurpers under Constantius II (81).

In his lengthy account, Libanius deliberately ignores one development which certainly had a deep impact on his role as an orator. He does not mention his main rivals in his function as a local patron and advocate of Antioch: monks and bishops who at these times spoke up for the populace and even for the town on many occasions.[63] The orator's way of dealing with the riot of the statues is characteristic:[64] At the proclamation of a tax increase, the Antiochenes rose up, burned down a house and even destroyed portraits of members of the imperial family, an act judged as *maiestas* (high treason). Theodosius threatened the Antiochenes with severe punishment, but could be mitigated by bishop Flavianus who traveled to court while his priest John Chrysostom exhorted the faithful in the church to turn away from sin because the riot and its consequences were manifestations of God's wrath.

In contrast to many *curiales*, Libanius seems to have stayed in town during the time of crisis and even reprimanded those who fled to their country estates (*Or.* 23). Afterwards, he wrote two speeches on the imperial representatives responsible for the restoration of order in Antioch, which may have been delivered to an audience of trustworthy people (*Or.* 21, 22). Besides, he composed two orations directed at the emperor which certainly were never held (*Or.* 19, 20). It is clear that Libanius was more an observer of these occurrences than an active participant in them. This event is almost emblematic for the growing importance of Christian functionaries in coping with a local crisis.

Libanius, however, gives a fundamentally different account in his first oration:

> Another governor (sc. Celsus: *PLRE* 1:194) followed. Under him, it seemed that evil spirits were at war with us. Terrible things occurred; stones were thrown at the portraits of the emperors and rattled loudly against them. Their bronze statues were dragged along the ground, and insults more hurtful than any stone were hurled at the rulers of the Empire. Thus many people fled, and it was the exile who bewailed the fate of him who stayed. Yet in hope lay ruin; despair became salvation. But for this salvation I personally was held responsible. With orations and tears I soothed the members of the newly-arrived commission of investigation and began to induce in them an eagerness for petitions, so that in a little while petitions

[63] See, e.g., P. Brown, *Authority and the Sacred. Aspects of the Christianisation of the Roman World* (Cambridge, 1995); C. Rapp, *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity. The Nature of Christian Leadership in an Age of Transition* (Berkeley, 2005).

[64] See pp. 421–422 and note 20.

> came thick and fast. Let me regard this as the work of Týche, and also the success of the numerous orations, each with its own variation of style, composed by me on the same theme. (252 f.)

Libanius is consistent with his speeches, as they have come down, in highlighting the influence of evil spirits. He is not even lying, but he closes his eyes to the role of bishop Flavianus, who by his intercession had achieved the sending of the commission to Antioch. Interestingly, Christianity is not mentioned at all in this context, not even the aspect that Christians were among the chief rioters, a fact Libanius had alluded to in his (nearly) contemporary speeches.[65] Now he only strives to stress his influence as a person taking responsibility for the whole town, as a real patron.

In summary, Libanius is a local notable albeit with a somewhat dwindling influence, who aimed at drawing attention to his importance by stressing his good contacts with governors and courtiers. His oration shows him as a person suitable to act as the patron of his town, although some officials, despising his rhetorical art, were not worthy of their dignity and did not respect Libanius adequately.

3. *Religion*

A central theme in the first oration is Libanius' religious attitude.[66] The world he lives in is a world full of reminiscences of classical mythology (e.g., 30, 93, 284 f.). Tyche directs everything and everybody (e.g., 146, 266). The speech is intended to reveal how Tyche has governed Libanius' life. Even if mishaps may be ascribed to Tyche (e.g., 95, 117, 152), she is neither seen as an envious, erratic goddess, nor is she the all-determining *heimarmene* of Stoic philosophy: Libanius is free to adopt the lifestyle he prefers.

Tyche is responsible for good as well as bad luck, but, on the whole, she grants a successful life to Libanius.[67] In some aspects this concept

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[65] Leppin, "Steuern," 115.

[66] For his religious attitude in general, see V. Limberis, "'Religion' as the Cipher for Identity: The Cases of Emperor Julian, Libanius, and Gregory Nazianzus," *HThR* 93 (2000), 373–400, 386–390; Sandwell, *Religious Identity in Late Antiquity*, esp. 20–27.

[67] Cf. K. Malzacher, *Die Tyche bei Libanios* (DPhil., Strasbourg, 1918), who underlines that the concept of Týche in the first oration is different from what can be gleaned from the other works of Libanius (esp. 53–69); cf. Martin and Petit, *Discours*, 28–30; B. Schouler, "Libanios et l'autobiographie tragique," in *L'invention de l'autobiographie d'Hésiode à Saint Augustin*, eds. M.F. Baslez, P. Hoffmann, and L. Pernot (Etude de literature ancienne) 5 (Paris, 1993), 313.

reminds us of Christian providence, but in actual fact this is a genuine pagan concept. There is no economy of salvation working for the world, Libanius is not guided to conversion, but rather the—in some regards fluid—concept of Tyche[68] is brought into play to explain occurrences which could be deemed as contingent. It is comparable to the *Týchai* protecting individual towns, which were popular in late antiquity, namely in Antioch.[69] It is not a rigorously defined philosophical concept, but an idea which seems to be embedded in a tradition of popular thinking.[70]

The power of Tyche does not exclude the existence of other gods intervening in human affairs. Their importance is stressed in the later additions to the oration more than in the first part,[71] even at seemingly unimportant incidents. When horses lash out against Libanius with their hoofs and he is snatched away by the groom, he comments: "The hands were those of the groom, the will that of the gods" (259). It is obviously not important to know whether any particular deity or Tyche herself has intervened, as long as the orator feels to be protected by a superior power.[72] The protection extends to his *lógoi* (his studies, eloquence) in general. When he laments about the success of Latin and the decline of his studies, he nevertheless affirms: "However, the gods have granted this eloquence, and will in the end ensure that what they have granted will

[68] Malzacher, *Die Tyche bei Libanios*, 53–69 argues that the concept of Tyche is changing within Libanius' oration and seems contradictory. This thesis, which is typical of Malzacher's time, misses the point, because the essence of Libanius' Tyche is that she is working in a positive and in a negative way, but with a positive tendency in regard to Libanius.

[69] Cf. the exhaustive (not only) archeological study by M. Meyer, *Die Personifikation der Stadt Antiocheia. Ein neues Bild für eine neue Gottheit* (Berlin, 2006).

[70] Cf. also Norman, *Libanius' Autobiography*, xviii f., who points to the similarities between Libanius' concept and that of ancient Greek novels, which have a happy end—for which, however, gods seem to be responsible (see E. Rohde, *Der griechische Roman und seine Vorläufer* [Leipzig, 1914; reprinted Darmstadt, 1960], 296–308; M. Alperowitz, *Das Wirken und Walten der Götter im griechischen Roman* [Heidelberg, 1992], 75–87), moreover "the novel protagonists … make a total commitment to chance and can only passively await an outcome" (cf. S. MacAlister, *Dreams and Suicides. The Greek Novel from Antiquity to the Byzantine Empire* [London, 1996], 25), whereas Libanius makes his own contribution to his success. Libanius has more in common with Polybius (cf. F.W. Walbank, "Fortune [tychē] in Polybius," in *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography*, ed. M. Marincola, 2 vol. [Malden, Mass., 2007], 2:349–355), whose Tyche can be a goddess whose doings have a clear aim (1.4.1), but who can also act arbitrarily (29.22.2; cf. 15.6.8, 30.10.1).

[71] Norman, *Libanius' Autobiography*, xix. Asclepius already intervenes in the first part (143).

[72] 210, 235 f. Occasionally Libanius also speaks about demons, e.g. 137, 178, 204.

emerge victorious and regain the influence it once held" (234). Libanius even makes the experience of the gods taking vengeance upon his foes in their determination to protect his eloquence. After describing the flight of a governor opposed to Libanius to Tyre, where he is even besieged by the population, the orator concludes: "In Tyre he was punished by Tyre and by Hermes, for the gods of eloquence so brought it about, greatly angered at his insolence towards eloquence, since by his reckless folly good discourse was attacked by the bad" (274).[73]

The idea of the gods as protectors of *paideia* is brought out in the last passages of the speech, heralding vengeance for Cimon. His nomination as *consularis* of Cyprus had been cancelled due to senatorial protests referring to his mother's low origin. This was a hard blow for Libanius, all the more so as his son died on his return to Antioch. The orator even goes so far as to call himself a priest comparable to Chryses in the *Iliad*, who had been bereft of his daughters (285), and interprets a famine wasting Constantinople[74] as a sign of divine vengeance for his maltreatment in analogy to the plague in the camp of the Achaeans besieging Troy. This is said, as he affirms, in order to soothe his friends (283–285). Therewith, the last sentences again underline how much the work is centered on Libanius and his Tyche. His personal revenge is more important to him than the suffering of the Constantinopolitans.

The religious atmosphere is palpable everywhere. Libanius regards a friend as the son of a god (68). Prayers to the gods belong to everyday life (e.g., 32, 142, 233, 243, 270) as do laments directed toward them (e.g. 185). A prayer that Libanius says when searching for a suitable place to teach in Antioch (his rival taught in the Museum) is typical:

> I addressed Calliope thus: "Most glorious of the Muses, our city's guide, for what reason do you punish me so? Why do you, a goddess, ruin me? Why have you removed me from one position and refuse me another? While the deceiver flourishes, are you content to see his victim utterly cast away?" So I addressed the temple from afar as I stood in the colonnade. (102 f.)

Soon afterward Libanius' enemies are thrown down and he is even allowed to teach in the *bouleutérion* (city hall).

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[73] For the concept of *gods of eloquence* (*logioi theoi*, cf. 238), which can be traced back to Aristides (*Or.* 2.57, 2.46, 3.72, 31.13), cf. Norman, *Libanius' Autobiography*, xix.

[74] See Wolf, *Autobiographische Schriften*; Norman, *Autobiography*; and Martin and Petit, *Discours*, ad l against Norman, *Libanius' Autobiography*, who believes that Antioch was affected. However, the people who had made Libanius suffer lived in Constantinople.

When he suffers from severe attacks of gout and no doctor knows how to alleviate his pains, he asks Asclepius for help; which he receives although he is doubtful about the effect. In three visions, two of which occur during the daytime, the god appears to him and releases him from his ailments (143). Although divine help is decisive for Libanius' recovery, the relationship of medical doctors to soothsayers is not seen as mutually exclusive; rather, they seem to support each other, as a passage may illustrate in which Libanius speaks about his excruciating migraine:

> I prayed heaven for death in preference to any other boon, and was convinced that the malady would affect my reason. At the time of writing, this has not yet occurred, but I can have no confidence with regard to the future. Yet the very fact that it has not occurred is heaven's work for, through the agency of a soothsayer, I was forbidden to open my veins for bleeding, eager though I was to do so. The doctor's opinion was that, if this had occurred, my breathing would have quickened with the flow of blood, my head would have been affected, and that would have been the end of me. (243 f.)

Asclepius advises him to follow the precepts of the doctors (143). Others would have turned to monks with their sufferings, but in Libanius' world this is not necessary. Libanius seems to have less confidence in astrologers, but at least he thinks their advice worth mentioning (281).

Magical practices are very important in this environment. Libanius is on several occasions accused of using magical power (e.g., 43, 62 f.), a fact he denies. Narrating such allegations against him, he makes clear that, in contrast to some of his colleagues, he has no need of falling back on such practices in order to have success. Yes, he even has the impression that he himself is attacked with black arts (245–250, 249).[75]

Libanius does not paint an even picture of the religious situation in his time. There is a whole religious group that Libanius fails to mention. The strong Jewish community is completely ignored by him, although he had contacts with some of their representatives.[76] Moreover, in consequence of his traditionalist attitude, Libanius has a propensity to ignore the process of Christianization manifesting itself in the course of the fourth century;[77] Christian religion is never mentioned by its own name in this

[75] Cf. for this episode C. Bonner, "Witchcraft in the Lecture Room of Libanius," *TAPhA* 63 (1932), 34–44.

[76] S.W.A. Meeks and R.L. Wilson, *Jews and Christians in Antioch in the First Centuries of the Common Era* (Missoula, 1978), 59–66.

[77] See, e.g., R.A. Markus, *Christianity in the Roman World* (London, 1974); ibid., *The*

Atticist text. Libanius prefers oblique references or polemic words such as "profane" (39 ἀμύητοι), "unbelievers" (120, 207 δυσσεβεῖς), or "people who do not know the gods" (255). Many occurrences are narrated by him omitting their Christian context, although there can be no doubt about its importance. This has already been shown in the case of the Antiochene riot of 387; another case in point is the unrest of 342 in Constantinople (44–47), which arose from a conflict between two contenders for the city's Episcopal throne.[78] Libanius does not even take the opportunity to attack Christians for misdeeds that he ascribed to them in other texts: even while lamenting Julian's death (133), he does not mention that Christians were suspected of having killed the ruler, which he had suggested in his funeral oration for him.[79] Moreover, he ignores the fact that not only Latin rhetoric, but also Christianity lured pupils away from him, among them such gifted young men as John Chrysostom.

Nevertheless, the danger of anti-pagan legislation and attitudes is palpable everywhere. The orator speaks about the uncle of a friend who deliberately disregards Constantius' anti-pagan legislation, thus facing the danger of the death penalty (27).[80] He himself is threatened under anti-pagan law on several occasions: during his first stay in Constantinople he is charged with being in contact with an astrologer who knows magical arts (43), under Gallus he is again accused of magical practices (98), under Valens he is embroiled in a trial on magic (162) and again under Theodosius (194). In all cases, however, Libanius escapes punishment.

Libanius is not obedient to imperial legislation: in the knowledge that Valens hates soothsayers (171), Libanius deliberately relies upon them (173); under Theodosius he still shows confidence in this group (244) and even consults astrologers (281). He also knows that the grove in Daphne, the most important shrine in the surroundings of Antioch, is in peril and, incurring danger for himself, stands up for it against a malevolent *comes Orientis*. In the end Libanius is justified by *Týche* and by the emperor Theodosius (255, 262–265).

End of Ancient Christianity (Cambridge, 1998); W.V. Harris, ed., *The Spread of Christianity in the First Four Centuries. Essays in Explanation* (Leiden, 2005).

[78] Socr., *HE* 2.12 f.; Soz., *HE* 3.7.4–8.

[79] *Or.* 18.174 f., cf. Soz., *HE* 6.2.1.

[80] S.H. Leppin, "Constantius II. und das Heidentum," *Athenaeum* 87 (1999), 457–480.

Theodosius is famous for his anti-pagan legislation (namely *CTh* 16.10.11 f.). Although one has to keep in mind that these laws were often not executed to the letter, a fact that probably was in accordance with the emperor's will,[81] a Christian governor or an ambitious bishop could always put a traditionalist in danger. Libanius' comportment does not hide his stance, yet it is by no means incautious. Seeking help for his brother who had suffered a stroke, he turns to the gods:

> I decided to have done with the rest (i.e. doctors and amulets), and to betake myself to the altars, to supplications and to the power of the gods. There I would go in person and mourn—and that silently—unable either to look upon the images or to utter a single word to them. I would clasp my hands around my knees, bend my head upon them and drench my gown with my tears, and so depart. (201)

This was still in accordance with the anti-pagan legislation of this time (*CTh* 16.10.7 from 381). When in 384 he cannot participate in the Antiochene Olympia, he "composed an oration and could not deliver it: instead I took it and offered it to Zeus, at the same time worshipping the god with the scent of incense" (222), which was still allowed at this time, in contrast to blood sacrifices.

Although Libanius can remain true to his religious identity under Christian emperors, only being endangered by malevolent persons trying to charge him with illegal practices, the accession of Julian is a great relief to him: he joyfully depicts the reemergence of old traditions (119). Alas, it was to be only a short period of time in which Libanius was able to enjoy the pleasures of what he perceived as traditional religious life.

The behavior depicted by Libanius is guided by the principle of adhering to religious traditions and speaking openly about his pagan stance, but he avoids giving himself over to his enemies by breaking the laws. He does not provoke Christians or publically counteract imperial legislation even if he ignores it. Clearly, he does not ingratiate himself with the emperors by conceding too much to their Christian preferences. The counterexample is Bemarchius, a rival of Libanius in his Constantinopolitan days. He is regarded as an opportunist since he, although a worshipper of the gods, applauds Constantius, who had himself set up against them, even going so far as to praise the building of a church (39).[82]

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[81] H. Leppin, *Theodosius der Große. Auf dem Weg zu einem christlichen Imperium* (Darmstadt, 2003), 169–181.

[82] For Bemarchius, cf. *supra*, p. 435.

When Bemarchius suffers a series of rhetorical defeats against Libanius, he eventually accuses his rival of using magical practices against him (43)—which was a very dangerous attack for a pagan such as Libanius who tried to maintain his identity under difficult circumstances.

4. *Conclusion*

> When I call Proclus (a "bad" governor) to mind, I call to mind storm and tempest, flogging and blood. Yet even here there was some advantage for me, in that I was annoyed at his actions and was seen to be so, for I refused to approach him as I had done so many of his predecessors in office. Thus, I acquired a good name from our mutual dislike, but whereas mine was open and above board, his for me he tried to keep dark, but without success. (212)

Phrases like these are not atypical for Libanius' self-appraisal in his first oration. Modern readers are inclined to condemn it as a self-righteous, if not cynical, attitude. Yet judgments of this kind would not do justice to Libanius. On the one hand, self-praise is, as any reader of Cicero knows, more common in antiquity than today; on the other hand, his good and bad Tyche is the subject of Libanius' oration on which depends what can be said and what not.

Libanius is able to look back on a successful life under unfavorable circumstances. According to his own writing, Libanius wants to show that the gods have granted him "a mixture of fortune (Týche), and that (he was) neither the happiest nor the unhappiest of men" (1). And, as I have tried to show, he keeps to his program: He goes through his life distinguishing between those events which were fortunate for him and those which were unlucky. At the end of the first part as well as at the end of the second part, Libanius goes through difficult times: in both cases he utters his hope that nevertheless Tyche will protect him in the future.

The general impression is that Libanius' first oration was a work of nostalgia as well as a work of hope: nostalgia for the good times, when he used to be respected by governors, and hope for better times, because letters will be protected by the gods forever. Insofar Libanius' own life stands for something more: for the fate of *paideia*, which is represented by him and which survives thanks to his art. Another impression is that the spirit of rivalry lurks behind every passage. In a deeply changing world Libanius stays entirely focused on his career and on his triumphs over his competitors.

Yet there is more in this text. Libanius obviously depicts his life as an exemplary one. He demonstrates how a man of pagan education can

maintain his identity in a Christian world without becoming reclusive and retreating from the public.[83] Thus, his work is another document of the complex cultural and religious situation in fourth-century Antioch.[84] Libanius' stance is more than mere traditionalism: the way of life Libanius adopted was untraditional, insofar as he, in contrast to the family tradition, did not pursue a career in administration or accept attractive marriage offers. Rather, he decided to lead a life of intellectual pursuits. He does not take an inclusive attitude toward the tradition either, but rather selects those elements that fit his persona as an orator who keeps a distance from chariot races, theatrical performances, and similar pastimes, in the full knowledge of how unusual his comportment was even in his own milieu (5, 21 f., 37). On the other hand, this behavior must have seemed congenial to Christians with strong ideas about a life pleasing to the sight of God.

Moreover, the accounts of his communication with emperors, with governors, and with the populace of Antioch may be read as exemplary stories about how an educated man can have influence on the life of his friends and of his *polis*. He shows himself as a benefactor only guided by his willingness to lend his support to the town. Although he sometimes fails, we never hear Libanius say: I made a mistake and I had to change my outlook. Tyche has full responsibility. Nevertheless, there are apologetic traits in his texts, chiefly in regard to his conduct under Christian emperors. Not even under "bad" emperors, such as Gallus and Valens, does Libanius ever seem to have been really in danger, and there is a clue that he possibly profited a bit too much from Julian's reign according to his critics (125).

The second part of the oration gives the impression that Libanius was also motivated by private interests: apparently he wanted to state publicly that his illegitimate son was to be his legitimate heir. Yet this aim was eventually rendered pointless, for his son died before Libanius attached the last chapters to his work.

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[83] A similar interpretation was forwarded by Schouler, "Libanios et l'autobiographie tragique," 305–323: "Elle [i.e. l'autobiographie] propose aux contemporains et aux générations à venir l'exemple d'une vie tout entière consacrée à un combat, celui qui a mené Libanios pour que survivent deux valeurs clefs de l'hellénisme, le dévouement civique et la culture littéraire" (323). However, I do not see the tragic character pointed out by Schouler (in the spirit of tragic historiography in Hellenism), because Libanius' oration ends with a hopeful perspective.

[84] Sandwell, *Religious Identity in Late Antiquity*, 34–59.

Perhaps it is pure chance that the non-Christian tradition of autobiographical writing ends in the work of a local notable, but this observation fits in well with the overall picture of the realm of education in the ancient world. Local traditions became evermore important. Local elites were the backbone of the pagan tradition because the imperial elites, visible as they were, had to be cautious not to provoke the anger of influential Christians: Themistius' compromising attitude differs widely from the position of the Antiochene. In that sense, Libanius' first oration may be the characteristic work of a provincial individual who has more licenses than a man living in the capital. This remains speculation, however.

Libanius' first oration never did impress later generations in the way the "autobiography" of another provincial did: Augustine's *Confessiones* appeal to modern readers much more, owing to the attitude of critical introspection that they feel can be found therein. In modern eyes, Libanius seems to reveal too much self-importance; his focus on his Tyche and on his professional achievements strikes many readers as one-sided or even egocentric. Nevertheless, his first oration remains a chief historical document for the strategies of survival that educated pagans had to adopt in their struggle to maintain their identity in a world that was changing at a rapid pace.

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